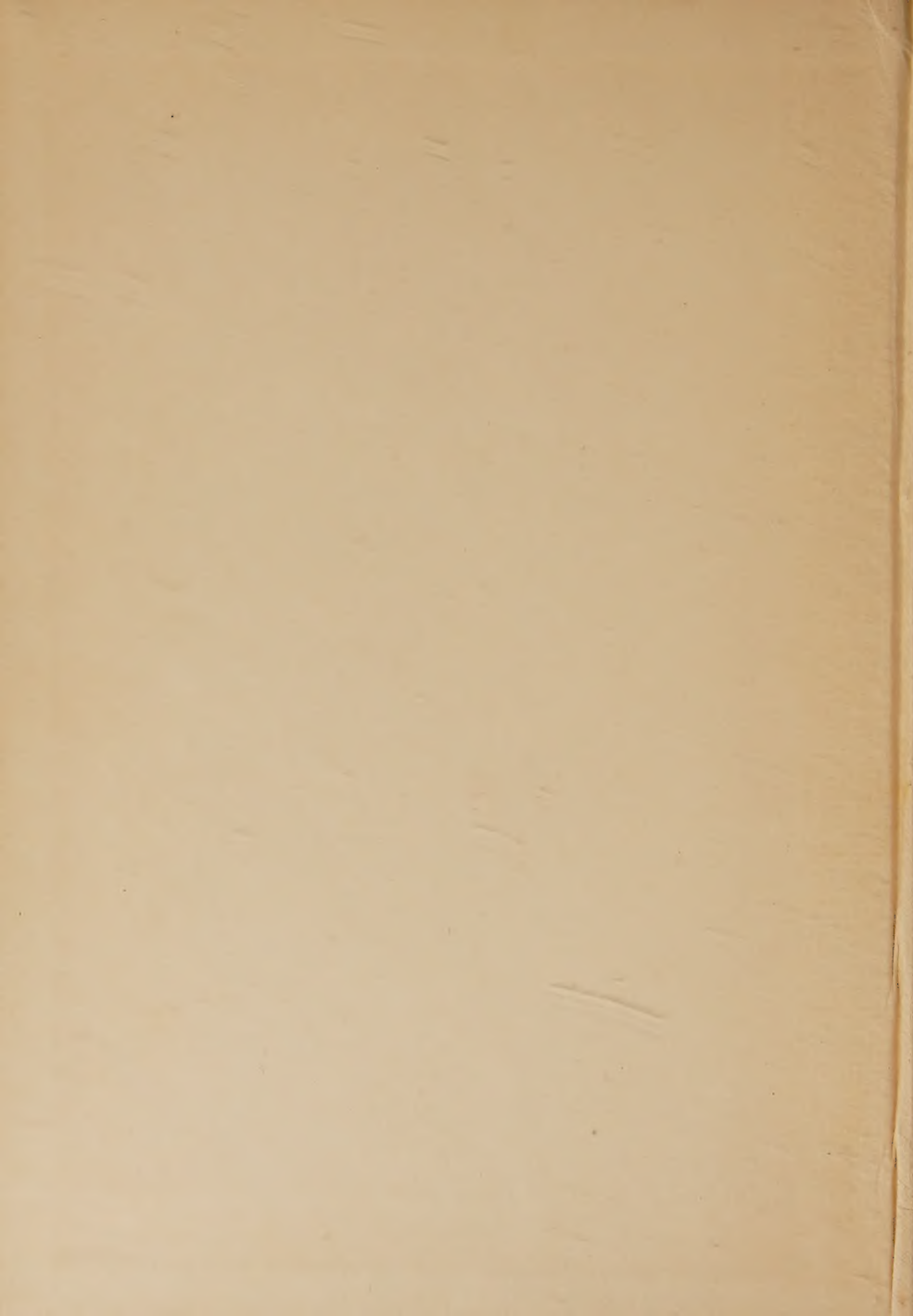




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BIBLE STORIES RETOLD

BY
HIRAM W. HAYES



BIBLE STORIES RETOLD

RETOLD FROM
A SPIRITUAL VIEWPOINT

BY
HIRAM W. HAYES

AUTHOR OF
THE MAN OF CLAY
PAUL ANTHONY, CHRISTIAN
A ROYAL GOOD FELLOW
THE PEACEMAKERS

For Children from Seven to Seventy

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By Hiram W. Hayes

Introductory

I DESIRE to assist, in every way possible, in the grand work of teaching the children to think right, is the incentive for this volume of Bible stories.

As a Bible student and a Sunday School worker, I have learned that the object of a Sunday School, is to so "teach the scriptures" as to show that the spiritual import of the Bible narrative is paramount to the simple physical facts. The stories in this book have been written with this aim, as well as to interest the children, and to bring out, very briefly, the helpful lessons contained in the lives of the Bible characters.

If this volume shall prove of any help whatever to those engaged in the work of teaching the children; or shall bring a single thought of God as life, Truth and Love to any child, I shall be well repaid.

HIRAM W. HAYES

Blessed are the pure in heart
for they shall see God.

—JESUS



— From the painting by Hofmann

THE BOY JESUS

Noah

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. (*Psalm xci: 1.*)



FOR thirty-nine days the rain had fallen in torrents and now on the night of the fortieth it continued with unabated fury. Over all the face of the earth the waters had spread themselves, so that looking from the windows of the solitary vessel which floated upon the waters, nothing but the wide expanse could be seen. With the exception of those sheltered within its hull, every living thing which existed upon the earth since the days of Adam had been destroyed.

Within the vessel, however, was comfort and safety, and as the eight persons therein watched the gathering darkness they felt no fear. Had not the voice of Truth spoken to the eldest one of the eight and commanded that he build the vessel; and had not everything come to pass just as the voice of Truth had said.

"When do you think the rain will cease, Father." one asked of the eldest, a man of venerable appearance.

"Soon, my son, soon," was the reply. "It is plain that the word of God has been proven."

"But, Father," said another, "how could you know that the rain would come."

"My son," said the father, "for six hundred

years have I striven to become pure enough in heart to know God as Spirit, that I might hear the voice of Truth when it should speak. All these years I have tried to keep myself free from the wicked thoughts of the men who now have been destroyed from the face of the earth. While I sought to know Truth, they lived in error — in ignorance of Spirit. Thus it has been that I have lived these many years and still appear but little older than those who have lived but a third of my time. Follow thou in my footsteps, for surely God is Spirit; is Life and Truth, and those who know Him and obey the voice of Truth shall be cared for.

“Now let us to bed and await the morrow, knowing that Spirit is everywhere and that in the Ark is safety, because the eternal God is our refuge and underneath our frail craft are the everlasting arms.”

The man who had thus spoken was Noah, and the others in the ark were his wife and three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, and their wives.

It was now fifteen hundred years and more since the days of Adam, and according to the Bible the world had been growing more wicked with each generation. Having sinned by disobeying God and eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, mankind had followed after evil, so that of all men on the earth Noah was the only one who was striving to do right and be good. There is no record that Noah had ever before heard the voice of Truth, but he certainly must have kept himself pure in heart in the midst



— From the painting by Gerard Hooft

NOAH LEAVING THE ARK

of all the iniquity; and so, when Truth spoke, Noah recognized the voice and obeyed it.

(*Genesis*, vii: 1-6, 24.) — “And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female; and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female. Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female, to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth. For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth. And Noah did according to all that the Lord had commanded him. And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth. And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.”

From all these things it is plain that in his generation Noah alone was pure enough in heart—in thought—to understand and obey the silent utterance of Truth. Thus it was that Noah's spirituality—right thought—became the ark of his salvation. The material ark was but a counterfeit of that real haven of rest—God, Spirit, Mind—in which we may find shelter from the daily storms of mortal mind. When the winds and rain beat upon his seemingly insecure abode, Noah feared them not, realizing his safety in eternal Mind.

(*Genesis*, viii: 1, 4.) — “And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a

wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged; And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat."

For forty days Noah waited for the waters to disappear and then sent forth a dove to see if the waters had dried off the earth so that he and his family might again live upon it. But the dove found no place to alight and so returned again to the ark.

(*Genesis*, viii: 10, 11.) — "And he stayed yet another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; and the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from the earth."

What a joyful message must have been the olive leaf which the dove brought back — a message from God that His promise had been kept. And from that day, the dove had always been looked upon as a messenger of peace and love.

(*Genesis*, viii: 18, 19.) — "And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him: every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark."

(*Genesis*, ix: 8, 11, 13, 15.) — "And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between

me and the earth. And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh."

And because it is impossible for God — infinite Mind — to change; because Truth is always the same, is always true, no matter what any one may think; and because Principle is everlasting, it always happens that whenever the condition arises which God has said, the rainbow appears — a beautiful harmony of color, symbolical of the perfect harmony of the one Mind.

Abraham and Isaac

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous. (*1 John*, v. 3.)



HAND in hand a man and a boy were climbing the steep side of a mountain in the land of Moriah, which in ancient days formed a portion of the land of Palestine. Upon the shoulders of the lad was bound a bundle of fagots with which to make a fire, while the man carried in his hand a lighted torch and a great knife. Tenderly the man helped the boy up the hill, ever and anon speaking to him some word of encouragement as they trudged along.

For several minutes they continued on their way in silence, the man deep in thought. Seeing his father thus absorbed the lad at length spoke:

(*Genesis*, xxii: 7.)—"My father. And he said: Here am I, my son. And he said: Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"

For a space the man did not reply, for his heart was heavy within him. Then seeing that the boy waited he said:

(*Genesis*, xxii: 8.)—"My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering; so they went both of them together."

The man was Abraham, the first of the three great patriarchs from whom the Children of Israel

were descended, and the boy was Isaac his son, whose mother was Sarah.

For many years Abraham had been striving to serve God and to know and do nothing but good. He had within him, as have all men, the desire to do right; but in those early days it was even harder to think and do right than it is now, because mankind had not then the commandments of God as made known through Moses and Jesus, which are now familiar to every boy and girl who study the Bible.

Abraham, therefore, had to obey the voice of Truth whenever it spake to him, in the best way he could plan, and while he realized that God was Spirit, he had not learned how to worship Him, as Jesus afterward explained, "in spirit and in truth." With Abraham, however, as with every man and woman and boy and girl, the harder he tried to do right, the closer he tried to live to God, Spirit, and the oftener he listened to and obeyed the voice of Truth, the clearer that voice became, and the better he was able to understand.

Because Abraham was a good man and had always obeyed to his highest understanding whenever the voice of Truth had spoken, God had promised him a son. But it was not until Abraham was an hundred years old and Sarah ninety that Isaac had been born. Then there was great rejoicing and for several years the heart of Abraham had been glad; but one day as he was walking over the plain looking after his great herds of cattle and sheep, and thinking what a rich and powerful man Isaac would be, the voice of Truth

came to him, asking if he were not thinking too much of Isaac and not enough of God; too much of earthly things and not enough of the spiritual.

He must have felt that he was, for immediately there came to him the thought that he must give up Isaac; in other words that he must sacrifice him.

Now, the only kind of sacrifice that Abraham knew, because he had not yet come to know God as Love, was the sacrifice of blood by fire — by what is known as a burnt offering. There is a helpful thought back of such a sacrifice. It is found in the willingness to give up anything we have, if by doing so we can keep our thought purer. This willingness to give, and the giving, is called obedience; and the more willing we are, the easier the sacrifice becomes, until finally we shall have given up everything that makes us impure.

When Abraham, therefore, felt that he should sacrifice Isaac, the only way he knew was by offering him up on an altar. He did not realize that he could show his obedience in any other way; that all the sacrifice demanded was that he put his son out of his thought when he became more to him than his desire to reflect God by doing good. He did not yet know, as the Bible now tells us, that to obey is more than burnt offering.

So to Abraham it appeared that God would have him sacrifice his son after the manner of other sacrifices he had made, although many years later, the Apostle James told us (*James*, i, 13) "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man," and Jesus said in the Lord's prayer

(*Matthew*, vi: 13 — Ferrar Fenton's translation)
"You would not lead us into temptation."

(*Genesis*, xxii: 3-4.)) "And Abraham rose up early in the morning and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose and went up into the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off."

When they had approached a little nearer, Abraham stopped and said to the young men who accompanied him:

(*Genesis*, xxii: 5, 6, 9.) — "Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship and come again to you. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.* * * And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood."

Then it was that Abraham made the real sacrifice which God demands of all of us. He showed his absolute willingness to give up his dearest earthly treasure in obedience to what he felt was the command of God.

That Isaac was his dearest treasure there can be no doubt, for not only did he love him tenderly, but in Isaac was his only hope that his seed should become a great and powerful nation. His action

was therefore a most wonderful lesson in obedience, (*Genesis*, xxii: 10.) — “Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.”

Now while God, who is Love, demands of man an absolute sacrifice of all material affections that tend to make him forgetful of good, this divine Love also demands that we find our greatest blessings in another's good, and certainly such a sacrifice as Abraham was going to make could be of no good to any one. So while he stretched forth his hand to take the knife, there came to Abraham the voice of an angel—a purer and more spiritual thought than he had yet had:

(*Genesis*, xxii: 11, 12.)—“And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me.”

That is, God knew that Abraham feared to do anything which was not the very highest good according to his understanding. What a joy this better understanding of God's will must have been to him!

(*Genesis*, xxii: 13, 14.)—“And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.”

Then to show how speedily mankind reaps the reward of obedience, another promise came to

Abraham which filled him with even greater joy than any he had yet felt.

(*Genesis*, xxii: 15, 19.)—"And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

A promise which has certainly come true, because it has been largely through the descendants of Abraham that there has come to the world the greatest proofs of the protecting care of God—that God which is all Life, Truth and Love.

Joseph

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart. (*Psalm xxiv: 3, 4.*)



CLAD in a brilliant coat of many colors, a lad of seventeen was wandering about the fields of Shechem in the land of Canaan. He had been sent by his father to carry a message to his brethren, who were tending their father's flocks, and to bring back word of how the flocks prospered. Not finding his brethren where he expected, the boy was searching for them when he met a stranger who asked his name and what he sought.

"I am Joseph, son of Jacob," he said, "and I seek my brethren. Tell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks."

And the man replied: "I heard them say; 'Let us go to Dothan.'"

So Joseph set out for Dothan, where he found them.

Now Jacob, or Israel as he was also named, had altogether twelve sons; the ten elder, who were tending their flocks, and Joseph and Benjamin, who were much younger. These twelve were the original children of Israel. The Old Testament, which comprises the greater part of our Bible, is chiefly a history of these men and their descendants, and their effort to serve God,



—From the painting by H. F. Schapi

JOSEPH SOLD BY HIS BRETHREN

Spirit. Many times they broke His commandments and turned from the true idea of God, and whenever they did they suffered for it; but as often as they returned again to that God who is divine Principle, Mind, Truth and Love, they regained their prosperity.

Of all the sons of Jacob it appears that Joseph was the most Spiritual—that is, he had the purest thought, or, as we sometimes say, was the purest in heart. Now Jesus once said: “Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.” Although living many years before Jesus, Joseph was a proof of this great truth; and because of his pure thought he was better able than his brethren to understand God as He really is.

In spite of the fact that Joseph was good and always tried to do right, his brethren hated him. They hated him because he was his father’s favorite, and they hated him because his pure thought enabled him to discern the future as they could not. In his dreams, as was the case with other of the ancient patriarchs, he was able, we read, to discern coming events.

(*Genesis*, xxxvii: 5-7: 9, 10.)—“And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold I have

dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed. Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth."

Thus it was that when Joseph finally found out where his brethren were feeding their sheep and approached them, that they said one to another:

(*Genesis*, xxxvii: 19-20.)—"Behold this dreamer cometh. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams."

That they would have done this there is no doubt, had not one brother, Reuben, prevented it. So instead of killing the lad at once, they put him into the pit, intending to leave him there. But while they were eating their dinner a band of Ishmaelites passed by on their way to Egypt, and taking Joseph from the pit his brethren sold him to the Ishmaelites. But they kept his beautiful coat and smeared it with blood, and when they returned home showed it to their father who believed his son, Joseph, had been devoured by wild beasts.

When the men who had bought Joseph arrived in Egypt they sold him to a man named Potiphar, a captain of the king's guard.

(*Genesis*, xxxix: 2-4.)—"And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And

his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand."

It often happens when we are trying our best to do right and follow in the way of Truth, that error finds some channel through which to reach us and make our work harder. So it was with Joseph. Evil in the form of a lie, as it always is, accused him of wrong doing, and before he was able to disprove the falsehood he was thrown into prison, where for more than two years he worked to destroy this claim of error. But a way was finally opened to him, which was as strange as it was unexpected.

Because Joseph always tried to do right, he had not been in prison long till the jailer found out that he could be trusted and made him a guard.

(*Genesis*, xxxix: 22.)—"And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.

(*Genesis*, xl: 1, 3, 6, 8.)—"And it came to pass after these things that the butler of the king of Egypt, and his baker had offended their lord, the king of Egypt. And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound. And Joseph came unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and, behold, they were sad. And they said unto him, we have dreamed a dream and there is

no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you."

So both of the men told him their dreams, and Joseph, because his thoughts were pure, heard the voice of Truth and interpreted the dreams aright. That of the butler was that he should be restored to the king's favor, while that of the baker was that he should be hanged. To the butler Joseph said:

(*Genesis*, xl: 14, 23.)—"But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house. Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him."

Two years after this, during which time Joseph had been holding a good thought toward the butler in spite of his seeming neglect, Pharaoh, the king, dreamed two similar dreams in one night. Then it was that the butler remembered Joseph and mentioned him to Pharaoh.

(*Genesis*, xli: 14-16.)—"Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon; and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it. And Joseph answered Pharaoh saying, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace."

In both of these cases we see that Joseph took

no credit to himself, but, as did Jesus many years later, he declared that it was God working through him that enabled him to do the works that he did. And so, today, if we would do good deeds and heal the sick and sinful, it must be by keeping our thoughts so pure that they will reflect the one divine Mind, which is all Life, Truth and Love. It was thus that Joseph was enabled to give an interpretation of the king's dream, which was that the next seven years were to be years of plenty and the following seven years of famine, in which nothing would be raised in the land. Joseph told Pharaoh to build great warehouses in which the grain raised during the first seven years could be stored to feed the people during the next seven. It was much the same advice that is given in the New Testament by Jesus when He says: "I must work while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work," and the lesson to be learned is this:

Our minds are the mental storehouses. Let us in times of health and happiness so fill them with good thoughts — thoughts of Truth and Love — that in case we are attacked by error; in case seeming trouble and inharmony come, we shall still be able to know the truth which will make us free from bondage thereto.

After this Pharaoh made Joseph governor over all Egypt to build these storehouses. For seven years he filled them, and then came the famine.

(*Genesis*, xli: 57.)—"And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn, because that the famine was so sore in all lands."

But how fared it with his brethren while all these things were happening to Joseph. Here is what we find in:

(*Genesis*, xlii: 1-3, 6.)—"Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, he said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? And he said, Behold I have heard that there is corn in Egypt; get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die. And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt. And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land; and Joseph's brethren came and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth."

Which was just exactly what Joseph, as a lad, had dreamed they would do, and for which his brethren wished to destroy him.

To tell of how Joseph sold corn to his brethren and then gave them back their money; to tell of how, after causing them just enough trouble to set them to thinking of the evil they had done him and repent thereof, he told them who he was, and how he finally brought them and his father to Egypt and cared for them, is a long story and can be found in the last eight chapters of *Genesis*. It is enough to know that he did do this, and that by so doing he turned a seeming evil into a great good.

More than any other of the early characters in the history of the Children of Israel, Joseph practiced the Golden Rule and proved that the noblest as well as the most sensible and scientific way to overcome our enemies is by loving them and so turning them into friends.

Moses

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord. (*Deuteronomy*, vi: 4.)



THE story of Moses is the story of the rescue of the Children of Israel — the descendants of Joseph and his brethren—from the bondage of the Egyptians and many forms of error. It is the story of truth destroying in their minds the belief in a power other than God, or good, and giving to them, in place of this belief, the knowledge of God as the only power. It was Moses who taught the Children of Israel how to worship spiritually; what the laws of God or good, really are, and how to obey them, and to know God as All-in-All.

It would take a big book to tell how Moses did all these things, and so this story will be mainly about how Moses, through his great understanding of Truth, was able to talk with God and receive the Ten Commandments. These commandments are the first truths we should all learn in our study of the Bible. Having once learned them, and what they really mean, we should strive our best to obey them.

It was now nearly 400 years since Joseph brought his father and brethren to dwell in the land of Egypt — about four times as long as the United States has been a nation — and during that time the Children of Israel had greatly increased in numbers.

In fact, so rapidly had they increased that the Egyptians had begun to fear them and for many years had treated them as slaves. But for all this they increased in numbers until the king, also Pharaoh — for every king of Egypt was called Pharaoh — ordered that all the boy babies should be put to death.

When Moses was born, however, his mother made up her mind that she would save him. In thinking of a way she decided upon a novel plan. She wove a basket of bulrushes, made it waterproof and then laying the baby in it, hid him in the flags along the river's bank. Here he was found by the daughter of the king, who took him home and when he was old enough sent him to school and educated him. Thus Pharaoh's evil thought was found to have no power; and, not only that, but the evil act which was intended to thwart God's will was made a channel for good. Being a messenger of Truth no error could touch Moses, for divine Love protects Truth's messengers at all times, from all forms of error.

While Moses was growing to manhood he saw, day by day, the slaving of the Israelites, and realized, as can all others, that slavery was wrong. Truth has made this plain to mankind in all ages, and so the right thought of Moses caused him to have a great desire to destroy this error. This desire, this prayer being continually in his thought, made him receptive to the will of God, Spirit, and at length the voice of Truth spoke to him in a marvelous manner.

(*Exodus*, iii: 2-4, 7, 10, 13, 14.)—"And the angel



— From the painting by Gustave Doré

GIVING THE LAW ON MT. SINAI

of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people, the Children of Israel, out of Egypt. And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the Children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name, What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the Children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you."

From this Moses understood that the Supreme Being—that great I AM whom man reflects and in "whom we live and move and have our being" — had made Himself manifest; and from that day he followed God and never doubted whenever he heard the voice of Truth.

Then Moses went to Pharaoh, and by many wonderful proofs of his understanding that man and the universe are spiritual and not material, finally induced Pharaoh to let the Children of Israel go. Sustained ever by the power of divine Love.

and guided by Truth, he led them out into the wilderness where for forty years they lived while they were learning the difference between good and evil, truth and error.

During this time they had many trials and temptations and often murmured against Moses for bringing them into the wilderness. But Moses, through his understanding of God as Spirit, Life, Truth, and Love, overcame all obstacles.

The first time the Israelites complained was when they seemed to have no means of getting food. Then Moses turned away from the sense of things as they seemed, to the spiritual reality; to God who is the substance of all that really is;

(*Exodus*, xvi: 11-15, 18.)—"And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, I have heard the murmurings of the Children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God. And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the host. And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground. And when the Children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat. And when they did mete it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating."

This teaches us that we should look to God for our every supply of good, day by day; to ask only as our need requires and not to hoard up for to-morrow. Therefore let us ever remember that day by day the manna fell and that there is no necessity of being anxious for the morrow.

The Children of Israel did not at once profit by the proofs they had of God's omnipotent care, and when later on they could find no water to drink, instead of turning to God who gave them manna and quail, they again complained to Moses.

(*Exodus*, xvii: 5, 6.)—"And the Lord said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel."

So from day to day, God, Spirit led them on, teaching them little by little the great truth that man is spiritual. After some months of wandering they came to a mountain called Sinai and here it was that Moses, through his spiritual understanding of truth, received from God the Ten Commandments. These commandments are here given, together with some thoughts which may help us to obey them.

The Ten Commandments

I

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
Thou shalt have no God but good.

II

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

Thou shalt know God only as Spirit; and man, in His image, as spiritual.

III

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God, in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

Thou shalt have no thought of God save as Spirit — Life, Truth and Love.

IV

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is,

and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Remember that every day is God's day in which it is lawful to do good, and good only.

V

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Honor God who is thy Father, Mother.

VI

Thou shalt not kill.

Thou shalt know it is impossible to kill, for God is Life.

VII

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt have no impure thought.

VIII

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt know that God, Spirit, is all substance and there is naught to steal.

IX

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Thou shalt know thy neighbor as spiritual and not material.

X

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.

Thou shalt know that what blesses one blesses all—since all is from God and therefore, there is naught to covet.

Joshua

And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: For with God all things are possible. (*Mark, x: 27.*)



IT WAS harvest time in the vale of Moab and all the country was yellow with ripening grain when the Children of Israel encamped on the bank of the river Jordan, prepared to cross over and take possession of the promised land as God had commanded. Led by the divine Principle, Love, they had, after many years, reached this stage of their journey. Now that they were ready to cross and approached the river, they found it out of its banks and overflowing all the valley, and so had encamped upon the bank just out of reach of the rushing waters.

But a few days previous, the earthly career of Moses had ended and now Joshua was in command. Joshua, as all who read the Bible know, was the son of Nun, of the tribe of Ephraim, and was the man chosen by God to lead the Children of Israel out of the wilderness in which they had been wandering for forty years. So well did he perform his task that in a very short time, not only had he taken possession of the land of Canaan, but he had destroyed all the heathen nations which dwelt therein and which stood for all sorts of error, and brought peace and harmony to the land.



— From the painting by Gustave Doré

THE WALLS OF JERICO FALLING

Weighted down with a sense of loneliness since Moses, his beloved teacher and counsellor, had passed on, Joshua sat in his tent praying to God for guidance in the great work that had been given him to do. Often had he sought this guidance before, but now the task before him appeared so great that he seemed almost overcome by the thought of it. For the moment he had forgotten that God was omnipotent—that man's strength is in the divine Mind, and not in his own. The night was passing and the day was rapidly approaching when he must lead the people across the Jordan into a land filled with the fiercest of enemies, and here, before them, was the swollen river.

But as Joshua continued in prayer, and thus brought himself into harmony with that omniscient Mind which knows and governs all, he heard as distinctly as though it had been one of his lieutenants, the voice of Truth speaking.

(*Joshua*, iii: 7, 8.)—"And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan."

That morning the people assembled at daylight on the banks of the river. Being the first great difficulty that Joshua had to overcome, there were many in the host who were waiting to see how he would do it. They, too, were forgetting that it

was God and not Joshua who was leading them. But even while they waited, Joshua approached the men who were bearing the ark. He realized that divine Love had met all their previous needs and that it would continue to do so. He had no fear. The wilderness of doubt and darkness had been left behind, and so he commanded the bearers to advance into the water.

(*Joshua*, iii: 15-17.)—"And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest), the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon a heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho. And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground until all the people were passed clean over Jordan."

Now it appeared from the spies which had previously been sent out by Joshua, that the dwellers in the land of Canaan had heard how, beforetime, God had divided the Red Sea to let the Children of Israel, directed by Moses, pass through when they were fleeing from Egypt. Now that these peoples had likewise seen the Jordan divided to let Joshua lead the people across, they were all filled with a great fear and shut themselves up in their cities.

The nearest of all these cities was Jericho, a walled town of much strength. These walls were very thick and the MATERIAL of which they were made was the strongest that could be found. Inside these walls the people thought they were safe from the Israelites, but knowing that God was Spirit, Joshua had no fear that he would not be able to overcome any material obstacles. He continually turned to Spirit for guidance, and one day while up near the city looking at the frowning walls and trying to realize the allness of Spirit and the nothingness of matter, there came to him such a perfect understanding of this divine Principle, that, as he lifted his thoughts heavenward, Truth became manifest to him as a man with a sword—for who can devise the manner of Truth's appearing.

(*Joshua*, v: 13-15.)—"And Joshua went unto him and said unto him: Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship and said unto him, What saith my Lord, unto his servant? And the Captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so."

In other words, Joshua laid aside for the time all sense of materiality, and with his spiritual sense freed from error was able distinctly to hear the voice of Truth.

(*Joshua*, vi: 2-4.)—"And the Lord said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho,

and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour. And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass that when they make a long blast with the rams' horns, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout and the wall of the city shall fall down flat and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him."

Being always obedient and faithful to the smallest detail, Joshua did exactly as God had commanded for the six days.

(*Joshua*, vi: 15, 16, 20.)—"And it came to pass on the seventh day that they rose early about the dawning of day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people; Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city. So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city."

In the destruction of Jericho, which was the first great demonstration of truth over error after the Children of Israel had crossed into Canaan,

the land of false gods — false beliefs—it will be noticed that the work was done only when all the people shouted *together*, thus proving the value of a united effort — of united thought. Then God commanded that every living thing in Jericho should be destroyed; also that such gold and silver as could be used for good, God, was to be turned into the treasury for the whole people. A man, Achon, however, seeing a wedge of gold and other treasure, took it, and unbeknown to any one hid it in his tent.

A few days later Joshua sent three thousand men to capture a city called Ai; but instead of capturing it, the Israelites were driven off and many of them slain. Joshua knew at once that some error had crept in because God had promised to protect Israel, and Joshua knew that Truth itself never changes; but he also knew that it is impossible to disobey a command of God without suffering therefor.

So Joshua called all the men before him by tribes and families. When Achon appeared his fear quickly uncovered the error and it was easily destroyed.

The real error, you see, was not only in taking the gold, but in the impure thought back of the act—a thought that it is possible to make a god of covetousness or any power other than good. This impure thought destroyed the perfect faith in God which it was necessary for all to have if they would do God's perfect will. After the error had been destroyed in their own thoughts, the Children of

Israel were easily able to take the city and destroy the error they found there.

In destroying all the wicked tribes in Canaan and overcoming all error, Joshua was many times called upon to prove the words of Jesus, that with God all things are possible, and that divine Principle never made a material law to annul a spiritual law. On one occasion, even as Jesus many years later calmed the wind and waves by his understanding that Spirit was supreme, so did Joshua break one of the most rigid of the so-called material laws. He was pursuing an enemy which he had overcome and the day was rapidly passing. Fearing that darkness would come and protect the fleeing enemy — the rapidly disappearing error — Joshua asked for more light, more truth.

(*Joshua*, x: 12-14.)—"Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day."

Gideon

The wicked flee when no man pursueth; but the righteous are as bold as a lion. (*Proverbs*, xxviii: 1.)



HIDDEN from sight by the vines and brush, which had grown up and covered a ruined winepress in the land of Canaan, a young farmer was threshing wheat by stamping it with his feet so as to make as little noise as possible. Suddenly he stopped and listened. Then pushing back the leaves, he peered anxiously out through the underbrush.

"Another band of the enemy!" he said to himself. "Are we never to be rid of this foe which takes away our cattle and grain, and leaves us barely enough to eat? Surely the Lord has forsaken us!"

For several minutes he watched a band of horsemen riding over the plain below, and when they at length disappeared over a little hillock he resumed his work with downcast eyes and a sad heart, thinking of the words he had recently heard spoken by a prophet in Israel: "Thus saith the Lord, God of Israel, I said unto you, I am God, fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell, but ye have not obeyed my voice."

The young farmer was Gideon, son of Joash, and, as he continued his work, too well did he realize that the words of the man of God were

true. Since the days of Moses and Joshua a new generation had grown up, which had forgotten all the things that God had done for Israel and had turned from Him to the worship of the gods of the nations round about them, and did all manner of evil in the sight of the Lord. Because they were not in themselves a strong nation and had deserted God, who was their real strength, the Israelites had been overcome by the Midianites, a strong warlike nation, and for seven years had been held in bondage. Many of them had left the cities they had occupied under Joshua and were now living in dens and caves in the mountains. Gideon was one of these.

While Gideon thus pondered upon the words of the prophet, an angel of the Lord—a pure, spiritual thought—came to him, and he realized near him a DIVINE PRESENCE, and heard a voice saying: “The Lord is with thee. Go in this thy might and save Israel.”

So real did this angel appear that Gideon said aloud: “Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father’s house.”

Then he bowed his head, thinking how poor he was and what hard times had fallen upon them. He was without influence and without money. Not realizing that God, Spirit, was substance and the source of all supply, the sense of his poverty almost overpowered him; but again came that realization of the presence of God and the voice saying: “Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.”

Now, Gideon had always been trained in the Hebrew worship of God, although most of the people had forsaken this worship, and he be-thought him at once to make a sacrifice after the Hebrew custom. And so he said to the DIVINE PRESENCE:

(*Judges*, vi: 17.)—"If now I have found grace in thy sight, then show me a sign that thou talkest with me."

(*Judges*, vi: 19, 20.)—"And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it out unto him under the oak, and presented it. And the angel of God saith unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so."

Now, no sooner had Gideon obeyed the command, all of which was in accordance with the Hebrew law of sacrifice, than the offering was immediately consumed by a fire which rose out of the rock. Thus Gideon had received the sign he craved; and he built an altar there unto the Lord, which is still pointed out to tourists in the Holy Land.

After this Gideon had many spiritual talks with the DIVINE PRESENCE, and many proofs were given him that God, Truth, was leading and directing his acts.

At one time this clear voice of Truth made it plain to him that he should destroy the altar that had been erected to Baal, one of the gods of the Midianites, and he did so. This action greatly

angered the Midianites, and the Amalekites and all the other worshippers of Baal, and they gathered in a great multitude to completely destroy the Israelites.

Having proved many times that God was with him, Gideon sent out and gathered together all the tribes of Israel, that is, as many as he could in a short time, to fight the Midianites and their allies. You see, Gideon had not yet fully learned that it was God and not a great number of warriors who was to overcome error as expressed in these heathen nations, and so he thought he must have as great an army as possible. But God ordered otherwise.

(*Judges*, vii: 2.)—"And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me."

Being directed by God, therefore, Gideon, ordered that all who were in any way afraid should return home. Twenty-two thousand took advantage of this permission and left. Just think of it! Twenty-two thousand people, after all that God had done for them, afraid He could not protect them!

After the twenty-two thousand had gone there still remained ten thousand. And God said: "The people are yet too many."

So another division was made by the manner in which the people should drink out of a brook, and after this there remained only three hundred to go up and fight against the great multitude of the

Midianites and their allies who "lay along the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels were without number as the sands of the sea."

Still guided by God, Gideon waited until night had come, and then divided his little band into three companies of one hundred each. To every man he gave a trumpet and an empty pitcher, in which he could hide a torch until such a time as he wanted to show it to the enemy. Calling the men around him, Gideon said:

(*Judges*, vii: 17, 18.)—"Look on me and do likewise: and, behold, when I am come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do. When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

Then Gideon took an hundred men with him and went to one side of the camp and the other companies of an hundred men each stationed themselves on other sides of the camp. At the beginning of the middle watch, or about midnight, Gideon and those with him blew on their horns and brake their pitchers, and those on the other side did the same. And they flashed their torches and cried with a loud voice: "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

(*Judges*, vii: 21.)—"And they stood every man in his place round about the camp: and all the host ran and cried and fled. And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the Lord set every man's

sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host."

Which means that the Midianites and their allies were so filled with fear, because they were manifesting anger instead of love—error instead of truth, that they turned upon and destroyed each other, thus proving that error will and does destroy itself; and in the meantime Gideon and his band stood every man in his place realizing and declaring the truth to the very best of their understanding.

After Gideon had made this wonderful demonstration of the DIVINE PRESENCE, the people could not but believe and they returned to the worship of that God who is Truth. They wanted Gideon to rule over them, but he refused, saying: "I will not rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you."

So Gideon was simply made a judge and helped the people to do right in the sight of the living God.

Samson

Stand therefore, having your loins girded with truth. (*Ephesians*, vi:14.)



ON a cool autumn evening several lads were playing upon a little hillock that rose abruptly out of the plains that comprised the land of the Philistines. The sun had just sunk out of sight into the waters of the Great Sea and its

red glow was still spread over all the land, as the boys chased each other up and down the hill. Suddenly one of them stopped and called to the others:

“Look, Zurah! Look, Akash! How red the sun makes all the sky in the east.”

“The sun cannot make the sky red in the east,” said the lad called Akash. “He has buried himself too long in the waters of the Great Sea.”

“Then, what is the great light in the eastern sky?”

The boys were now all excitement. They ran to the top of the hillock and looked toward the east, where a strange sight met their gaze. The fields of corn off toward the mountains in the land of Judea were ablaze, while running through them could be seen scores of foxes, each with a burning firebrand tied to his tail. It was such a sight as no one had ever seen before, and they started toward the little village on a run to spread the news.

But fast as they ran, they were not the first to tell of the fire. Others had seen it and already a number of men had gone to try to put it out.

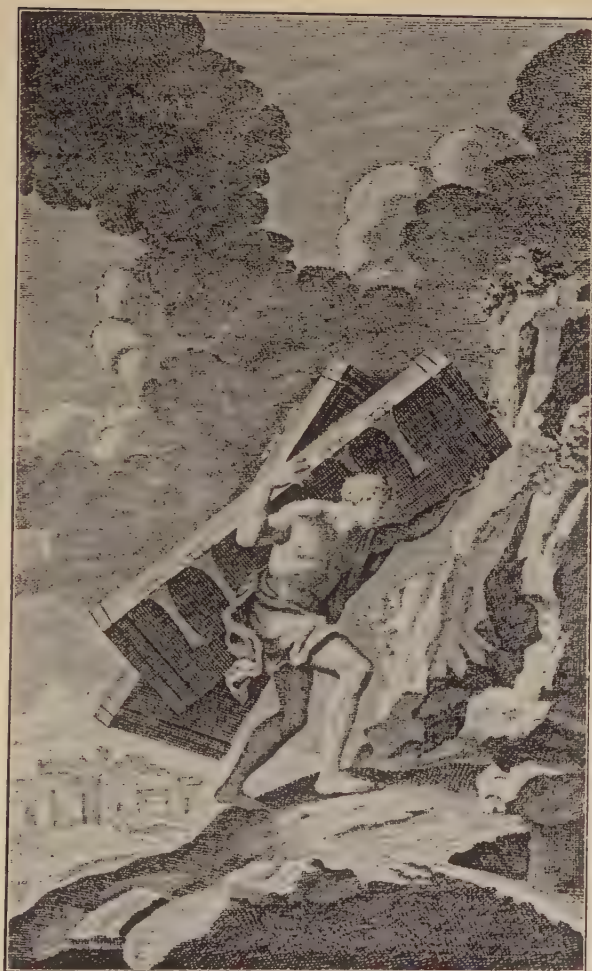
"Who could have done this deed?" they asked each other as they ran.

And without knowing, but one answer came to the minds of all. It must have been Samson, the Israelite—Samson, their great enemy.

And so it proved. Enraged because his wife, who was a Philistine, had been taken from him, Samson had planned this revenge as told in the Bible.

(*Judges*, xv: 4-8.)—"And Samson went and caught three hundred foxes and took firebrands, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails. And when he had set the brands on fire, he let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives. Then the Philistines said, Who hath done this? and they answered, Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he had taken his wife, and given her to his companion. And the Philistines came up and burnt her and her father with fire. And Samson said unto them, Though ye have done this, yet will I be avenged of you, and after that I will cease. And he smote them hip and thigh with a great slaughter: and he went down and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam."

Now Samson was a strong man—stronger than any other man of whom we have ever heard. Although at times Samson did not fully realize it, and thought that his strength was due to his long hair—



—From the painting by Francis Verdier

THE GATES OF GAZA TAKEN AWAY BY SAMSON

which had never been cut from the day of his birth—he was strong because he was sustained by God, Spirit; because he was in a measure reflecting the one Mind, which is omnipotent—all-power, by his obedience to God.

It is this perfect obedience to God, the Divine Principle of man, which gives us all strength; and we are strong in body and mind just in proportion as we obey absolutely His commandments.

After Samson had burned up the corn and avenged himself upon his enemies in the only way he knew, his own people came to him in great fear, because the Philistines had threatened to make war upon Judah. They demanded that he should deliver himself up to the Philistines, and in order to please his friends he allowed them to bind him and turn him over to the enemy, who had promised not to make war upon Judah if this were done.

Samson almost unconsciously knew that the Philistines were not spiritually minded. He knew that they were enemies of the living God and worshipped idols—matter, instead of Spirit. Thus they stood for error, while he—through his knowledge of God's dealings with the children of Israel—felt within him spiritual strength.

(*Judges*, xv: 14, 15, 20.)—"And when he came unto Lehi, the Philistines shouted against him: and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands loosed from off his hands. And he found a new jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand, and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith. And he judged

Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.”

Some time later, while Samson was a judge of Israel, he went up into the land of the Philistines to a place called Gaza and stayed there that night.

(*Judges*, xvi: 2, 3.)—“And it was told the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither, and they compassed him in, and laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were quiet all the night saying, In the morning when it is day, we shall kill him. And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron.”

But even as obedience makes men strong, so does disobedience make them weak, for, as we read in the Bible: Through disobedience came sin and through sin death. So, some time later, when Samson disobeyed God, breaking the first and seventh commandments and becoming full of impure thoughts, he lost his great strength. This should prove a lesson to all boys who are leaving home and going out to combat the error of mortal mind, of which the material universe seems full. If they keep their minds pure, error will have no power over them because they can see its unreality; but if they let their minds become impure, filled with impure thoughts, they will lose their strength—spiritual and physical—just as Samson did.

Feeling safe in his great physical strength, therefore, and forgetting whence it came, Samson went down into the land of the Philistines and fell in with

a woman whose name was Delilah. Now, Delilah was not a good woman, because she knew not God, good, and kept not His commandments. The lords of the Philistines, learning that she had great influence with Samson, offered her a big sum of money if she would find out wherein his strength lay. At first he told her reasons other than the right one, as he understood it; but after many days, in which her evil influence over him became greater and greater, he told her that his strength lay in his long hair, and while he slept she cut it off.

Then in his weakness — weakness caused not really by the loss of his hair, but because he had disobeyed what to him was a command of God, a divine law — the Philistines took him and bound him and put out his eyes. In pain and sorrow he was carried into their city and set to work as an ox, grinding corn.

While at this work Samson had time to think. Deserted by all who had been his friends when he was prosperous, he would have been left in utter loneliness had not his misfortune caused him to turn again to God. And the very minute he did this he found that God, Spirit, was ever present.

It was then he learned whence came his strength — not from his long hair; not from any physical condition, but from the realization of God as divine Principle, Omniscience, Omnipresence, Omnipotence—that is all-knowledge, all-presence, all power. With this understanding he was able, when opportunity offered, to make his final demonstration of the power of Mind, Spirit, over matter.

This opportunity came during a great jubilee that was held by the Philistines some days later to rejoice over his capture.

(*Judges*, xvi: 25, 28.) — “And it came to pass when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport: and they set him between the pillars. And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.”

The prayer was answered, as are all prayers of faith — the faith that comes of the understanding of God as All-in-All;

(*Judges*, xvi: 29, 30.) — “And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left. And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.”

The lesson to be learned from the story of Samson is that as wrong thinking leads to wrong action, so right thinking leads to right action; and as error is finally destroyed in our own thoughts, we are able at the same time to destroy the error round about us.



— From the painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds
SAMUEL

Samuel

And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.
(1 John, v: 6.)



ONE-HALF of our little book is done. In it we have read of how the voice of Truth was heard by the patriarchs of old, telling them in no uncertain tone of the will of God, or good; and many of us have probably wished that we had lived in

those days.

Children, there is no doubt that the voice of Truth can be heard to-day by the pure in heart, just as plainly as it was in the days of Abraham, Moses and Joshua. In some way or other Truth speaks to every son of God, and the closer we keep to God, Truth and Love, the more distinctly may we hear it, directing and advising us to abstain from evil, and do good. Among the last words of Jesus were these:

(*John*, xvi: 13.)—"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth."

And the Spirit of truth, this voice that has spoken to men in all ages with more or less plainness as their hearts were pure, is speaking to mankind to-day with renewed force.

To none is the voice of Truth plainer than to the little children. They may not always recognize it, but they can learn how just as did the little boy in the story we are about to read. He lived

at a time when the children round about him were full of error; but this boy, whose name was Samuel, kept himself pure in heart, by thinking only good and so in time he came to see God, Spirit, Love, and to hear His voice.

Had it not been for Samuel's mother, he might have been as full of error as some of the boys about him; but when he was young she brought him to a good man named Eli, who had charge of the temple, and in this quiet place, somewhat away from mortal thought, he heard little of evil, and so was in harmony with and heard the voice when it spake.

(*I Samuel*, iii: 1-4.)—"And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision. And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see; and ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep; that the Lord called Samuel; and he answered, Here am I."

Inasmuch as this was the first time that the voice of Truth had come thus plainly to the boy, he did not recognize it; but hearing the voice and being always obedient, he answered the best he knew how.

(*I Samuel*, iii: 5, 6, 8, 9.)—"And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou call'st me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down. And the Lord called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he

answered, I called not, my son; lie down again. And the Lord called Samuel again the third time. And Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child. Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down; and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, Lord; for Thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place."

Then it was that Samuel began to understand how Truth makes itself heard, and as he lay, there came to him a great realization of the DIVINE PRESENCE; that Spirit of truth which has ever come to the world through God's anointed; that sense of harmony — nearness to and unity with the Supreme Being that reveals him indeed as our Father, Mother, God. It was the same sense of harmony and unity which inspired Paul to say: "In God we live and move and have our being."

(*I Samuel*, iii: 10-15.)—"And the Lord came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth. And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever. And Samuel lay until the morn-

ing and opened the doors of the house of the Lord. And Samuel feared to show Eli the vision."

You see Samuel had not yet learned that it is the very hardest part of loving, to tell the truth to others about themselves. The friend who sees our faults and hides them from us is really our enemy, because, having discovered an error, he does not help us to destroy it.

(*I Samuel*, iii: 16-18.)—"Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here am I, And he said, What is the thing that the Lord hath said unto thee. I pray thee hide it not from me: God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide anything from me of all the things that he said unto thee. And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It is the Lord: Let him do what seemeth him good."

From that time on Samuel grew in a knowledge of the Truth and of that God who is all life, even the EVER-LIVING, and he grew in this knowledge of God until he was among the greatest prophets who ever judged Israel. In the words of the Scripture, as translated from the Hebrew tongue by Ferrar Fenton:

(*I Samuel*, iii: 19-21.)—"Thus Samuel became great, and the EVER-LIVING was with him, and none of his words fell to the ground; and all Israel recognized from Dan to Beersheba that Samuel was a true teacher from the EVER-LIVING. The EVER-LIVING, also continued to appear in Shiloh, for THE LIFE revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the EVER-LIVING, and the words of Samuel penetrated all Israel."

Saul

Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall. (*Proverbs*, xvi: 18.)



FOR three days a stalwart young man and his servant had wandered over the hills of Canaan in search of a herd of asses which had strayed away. They had passed over Mount Ephraim and through all the land of the Benjamites, and at the close of the third day approached a city in the land of Zuph. Still they had not found the lost animals, and at length the young man said to his servant:

"Come, Abijah, let us return; lest my father leave caring for the asses and take thought for us."

"Be not so hasty, Master Saul," said the servant. "Behold there is now in this city a man of God, an honorable man. All that he sayeth surely cometh to pass. Let us go there. Peradventure he can tell us the way we should go to find the asses."

"But what shall we bring the man?" asked he who had been addressed as Saul. "The bread is spent in our vessels, and there is not a present to bring the man of God."

"I have here at hand," replied the servant, "the fourth part of a shekel of silver. That will I give to the man of God."

"Well, then," said Saul, "let us go."

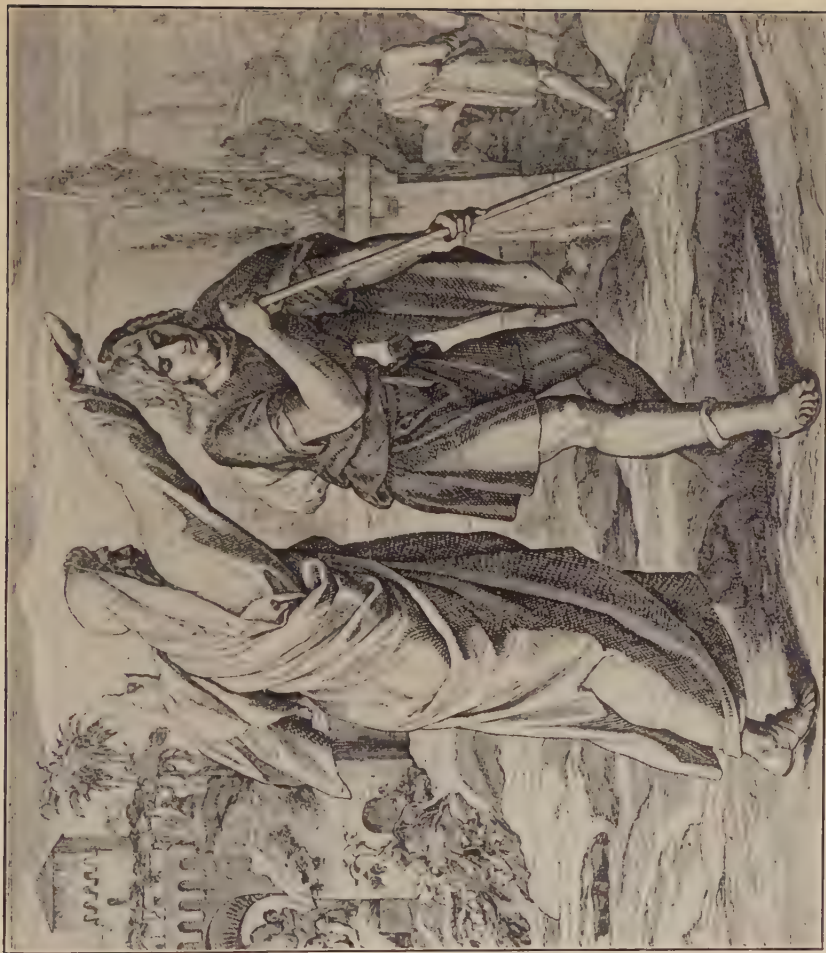
Proceeding on their way they shortly came to a well at which a maiden was drawing water. She looked at the strangers in much surprise, especially because of the unusual appearance and beauty of the young man, for Saul stood head and shoulders above all the other men of Israel, and was good to look upon. In reply to their inquiry she told them that the man of God would come shortly to make a sacrifice in the high place, and so they hurried on.

They had no sooner entered the city than they encountered the very man for whom they were looking. He was none other than Samuel, now a prophet and a judge over Israel many years.

Because Samuel had listened to the voice of Truth from the days of his youth, and the EVER-LIVING had always been nigh unto him, he knew Saul and the servant at once, because God had told him to expect them and had said to Samuel:

(*I Samuel*, ix: 16, 17.)—"To-morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines; for I have looked upon my people, because their cry has come unto me. And when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said unto him, Behold the man whom I spake to thee of! This same shall reign over my people."

To understand why Saul had been chosen by God, through Samuel, to become a king over Israel, who had never yet had a king, you must know that the people had become dissatisfied and asked for a king, like other nations. Samuel had tried to show them how much better it was to remain as



— From the painting by Julius von Schnorr

SAMUEL ANOINTING SAUL

they were, electing a judge as needed; but they would not listen to him. He tried to show them that God, omnipotent Mind, was the only king they needed, but they clamored so loudly that at last it was the course of wisdom to grant their wish. Through his pure, spiritual sight, gained from his understanding of the EVER-LIVING, Samuel had, therefore, recognized Saul as the man.

(*I Samuel*, ix: 18-21.)—"Then Saul drew near Samuel in the gate, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house is. And Samuel answered Saul, and said, I am the seer: go up before me unto the high place; for ye shall eat with me to-day, and to-morrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is in mine heart. And as for thine asses that were lost three days ago, set not thy mind on them; for they are found. And on whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on thee, and on all thy father's house? And Saul answered and said, Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? And my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Wherefore then speakest thou so to me?"

Without giving him any answer Samuel took Saul and gave him a high seat among the mighty men of Israel and after some days sent him home to his father's house, first anointing his head with oil as a sign that it was divine Principle that was leading him to this work.

Having been instructed by Samuel, Saul speedily acquired the true understanding of God as Spirit, Mind. Seeing his willingness to do right and

realizing his receptive thought, Samuel said to him as he was leaving:

(*I Samuel*, x: 6, 7, 9, 10.)—"And the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man. And let it be, when these signs are come unto thee, that thou do as occasion serve thee; for God is with thee. And it was so, that when he had turned his back, to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart: and all those signs came to pass that day. And when they came thither to the hill, behold a company of prophets met him; and the spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them."

When all the people saw and heard how Samuel had selected Saul to be king, and likewise saw that Saul was serving God by doing good at all times, they chose him as king and for a time he did exceeding well. But, like many another, Saul could not withstand temptation; and because he did not absolutely obey the commands of God, error found a way to get at him, through pride.

Now, you must know that pride is one of the worst of sins, because it makes us think we are great and wise and powerful of ourselves, when in reality we are only strong as we realize our dependence upon the divine Mind, which is all power, and which we reflect only as we are meek and pure. It was upon such as this that Jesus bestowed his blessing when He said: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."

And so, instead of putting on the whole armour of God, or good, as Paul said many years later, and

having on the breastplate of righteousness—right thinking — Saul did just the opposite by wrong thinking. By thoughts of pride and selfishness he so weakened his armour, that instead of being able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, he left an open joint through which the darts of error reached him.

First he showed his pride by disobeying the command of God in not destroying all the cattle of the Amalekites, whom he had conquered. From the first coming of the children of Israel into the promised land, God, omniscient Mind, had indicated that it was the part of wisdom to destroy everything that belonged to these unrighteous nations, because they stood for error and ungodliness of all sorts. If the Israelites should use the spoil, they, too, through lust and greed, might fall into error. But Saul, putting his wisdom before God, did not destroy all, but kept the best. Samuel knew of this and went to Saul:

(*I Samuel*, xv: 17-19.)—"And Samuel said, When thou was little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel? And the Lord sent thee on a journey and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed. Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord?"

Then Saul tried to excuse himself, not realizing that it is impossible to even attempt to break a command of God, divine Principle, without bring-

ing punishment; because if God, omniscient Mind, could change His law, He would not be omniscient—all-wise.

(*I Samuel*, xv: 20, 21.)—"And Samuel said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag, the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal."

Then it was that Samuel uttered that great truth, which is just as true to-day as it was at that time, and shows that God demands sacrifices only of those who are not always obedient to His commands—from the first and greatest to the least.

(*I Samuel*, xv: 22, 23.)—"And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the Word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king."

And so it proved. From that time Saul's reign was one of inharmony. He soon became a victim to fear—the very worst of all error, because it takes away spiritual strength, through loss of faith in that God who is Love. It is only as we perfectly reflect Love that fear is cast out. Then Saul consulted a prophetess who was not of God, and finally,

filled with anger, malice, and revenge, he was so overcome by fear, that he ended his mortal existence.

(*I Chronicles*, x: 3, 4, 13, 14.)—"And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him, and he was wounded of the archers. Then said Saul to his armourbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and abuse me. But his armourbearer would not; for he was sore afraid. So Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. So Saul died for his transgressions which he committed against the Lord, even against the Word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it; And inquired not of the Lord; therefore He slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse."

David

God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.
(1 John, iv: 16.)



ALAD, ruddy and fair of face, was tending a herd of sheep on the hills round about Bethlehem. As he watched them peacefully grazing the rich grass, he played upon a small stringed instrument, and sang snatches of Hebrew melodies, for he was the sweetest singer in Israel.

Suddenly there arose a great disturbance among the flocks, and the sheep scattered hither and thither, as from out a clump of bushes, with an angry growl, sprang a fierce mountain lion. He seized one of the lambs in his mouth and started away with it; but before he could gain the cover of the thicket the youth was upon him, and seizing him by the throat forced him to loose his hold upon the lamb.

Enraged at the attack upon him, the lion turned upon the boy. With open jaws and glaring eyes he sought to tear the lad to pieces. But the young shepherd, without the slightest fear, knowing that God, Spirit, has given man dominion over the beasts of the fields, seized the lion by his beard, while with his shepherd's crook he smote him upon the head until he was no more. Then the boy gathered his flock together, and, as the sun was sinking in the west, slowly drove them homeward.

The lad was David, son of Jesse. As he approached his father's dwelling he met a servant who said:

"Thy father desireth thy presence."

Hastily he came to where his father was, noting as he ran that a stranger was present. No sooner had he approached than the stranger, who was Samuel, the prophet, arose and taking a horn of oil he carried, anointed the youth's head, saying:

"Thus saith the Lord: Arise, anoint him; for this is he who shall rule over Israel."

There may have been many reasons as the years rolled on why David was chosen to rule over Israel, but the reason which the story of his life best brings out was that he knew God as omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent Love. And of all men of whom we read in the Old Testament, David appears most to have reflected that Love as shown forth in *courage, love and gratitude*.

David's *courage* was shown in his combat with the great Goliath of Gath, in which Truth, Spirit, working through him, completely destroyed error as manifested by Goliath. At the time David slew the giant he was still but a shepherd lad, but already had he realized the omnipotence of that Love which casteth out all fear. And so when Goliath came out and defied the army of Israel so that all the men of war were afraid, David fearlessly went out to meet him, clad in the full armour of God — that is, faith, good thoughts, purity, and the courage that comes from knowing that God is Love.

(*I Samuel*, xvii: 40, 44, 45, 48, 49.)—"And he took his staff in his hand and chose him five smooth

stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a script; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine. And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field. Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hastened, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine, and David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth."

It was the triumph of Truth over error; of Spirit over matter. But the proof of this power would not have been shown, had not David known the protecting strength of Love and felt no fear of any power apart from good.

David's *love* for God and for his fellow-man was shown in many ways. From his youth he practised the Golden Rule and so had many friends. Perhaps this love was never shown more clearly than in his actions toward King Saul, who, after David slew Goliath, became jealous of him and tried to kill him. On two different occasions David spared Saul when the king was at his mercy, proving even in those early days, when the divine command to return good for evil was not recognized as it now is,



— From the painting by Elizabeth Gardner

YOUNG DAVID RESCUING THE LAMB

that he understood the law of love. The first time that David spared Saul is told in

(*I Samuel*, xxiv: 2-5, 7.) — “Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats. And he came to the sheepcotes, by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet; and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave. And the men of David said unto him: Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul’s robe privily. And it came to pass afterward, that David’s heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul’s skirt. So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way.”

After Saul had passed out David followed some distance behind. Then he called to Saul, showing how he had spared him, and the king was greatly ashamed.

(*I Samuel*, xxiv: 17-19.) — “And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I; for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil. And thou hast showed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me; forasmuch as when the Lord had delivered me into thine hand, thou killest me not. For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? Wherefore the Lord reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day.”

But after awhile Saul's jealousy caused him to forget how David had spared him, and he again sought the young man, to destroy him. David and his friends fled into the wilderness, but Saul sought him even there.

(*I Samuel*, xxvi: 5-9, 12.)—"And David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched; and David beheld the place where Saul lay, and Saul lay in the trench, and the people pitched round about him. Then answered David and said to Ahimelech, the Hittite, and to Abishai, the son of Zeruah, brother of Joab, saying, Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp? And Abishai said, I will go down with thee. So David and Abishai came to the people by night; and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster. Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now, therefore, let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time. And David said to Abishai, Destroy him not, for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless? So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they gat them away and no man saw it, nor knew it, neither awaked."

After this David again made known to Saul what he had done, and again was the king ashamed and returned to his home. But so full of error had Saul become by this time that he refused to hear the voice of Love, and, as we know, was finally overcome by his own sin.

David grew in the understanding of Truth and Love and became a great king. His *gratitude* to God was proven by his good works, and is shown forth in his beautiful psalms of praise and thanksgiving, of which the following is one of the best known:

(*Psalm 23.*) — “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me: Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

Elijah

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. (*Romans*, iii: 6.)



FOR three years there had been a great drought over all the land of Israel. During these years there had been neither dew nor rain. The streams and fountains had dried up, and there was sore distress over the land. Many of the horses and cattle had died and now those in the king's stable were likely to perish.

This was the word brought to King Ahab by Obadiah, the governor of the king's household.

"And is there no place where we may obtain pasture?" asked the king.

"Not that thy servant knoweth."

"But it is thy place to know," said the king angrily, for Ahab was a wicked king and did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him.

(*I Kings*, xviii: 5.) — "And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks; peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts."

Now, while Obadiah was searching over the country he unexpectedly encountered an aged man of most dignified appearance, whom he recognized as the seer who had appeared before Ahab three

years before and prophesied the drought. At sight of him Obadiah fell upon his face and exclaimed.

"Art thou that my lord Elijah?"

The man replied: "I am. Go tell thy lord, Behold Elijah is here.

(*I Kings*, xviii: 16, 17.)—"So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah. And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?"

Do you see how error was trying to blame Truth for all the evil that it had brought upon itself? Ahab's question was like that of a boy or girl who breaks a rule of parent or teacher, and then blames those whose duty it is to enforce the rule, for all the inharmony which follows.

But Elijah was wise. Although he had told the king that the drought was to come, it was not he who had caused the drought. A divine law had been disobeyed; Principle had been violated and trouble had to follow, just as would be the case in working an example in arithmetic if you should try to make twice four equal five. Elijah's reply was stern and exact.

(*I Kings*, xviii: 18.)—"And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou and thy father's house in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim:"

How plain it is! This was but another example of the trouble that always overtook the children of Israel whenever they forsook the worship of God, and began to worship idols. Elijah understood, for Elijah realized the allness of Spirit and the

nothingness of matter; already he had proved that God is Life, and the substance of all that really is.

This had occurred in the early part of the drought when Elijah was living by the brook Cherith, which had finally dried up. While communing there alone with God, the voice of Truth had spoken:

(*I Kings*, xvii: 8-14.)—"And the Word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold the widow woman was there gathering of sticks; and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth."

And because Elijah recognized God, Spirit, as substance and absolutely depended upon him, the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail.

Having been able to prove that God, Spirit, is substance, it was but natural for Elijah also to prove God to be Life, because Spirit and Life are one and the same; and if God is Life and God is omnipotent, then the opposite of Life has no existence. Believing this, it was possible for Elijah to prove it when called upon to do so.

(*I Kings*, xvii: 17, 19, 21, 22.)—"And it came to pass after these things that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him. And Elijah said, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived."

After these things, being a very wicked king, Ahab sought to kill Elijah.

Now, the only error which Elijah seems not to have destroyed in his thought was pride — pride of the things which God, working in him, had enabled him to do. His words and actions lead us to think that because of these he considered himself better than other men, and thought that God should treat him differently, whereas he should have known that "God is no respecter of persons." All who steadfastly obey His commandments and have no fear will be protected by that love which knoweth no evil.

When his enemies sought to kill him, Elijah forgot this, and fear getting into his thought, he fled and hid in a cave in the mountain. Here again the voice of Truth made itself heard.

(*I Kings*, xix: 9-12.)—"And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice."

Then it was that Elijah realized fully what the voice of Truth was, and from that time on he never misunderstood the EVER-LIVING, and Life was an ever-present reality. He was not only able to see God, Spirit, and the spiritual universe, but to reveal it to others. Later he took as his student Elisha, the son of Shaphat, whom he found plowing.

Day by day these two men studied and prayed and became more and more spiritual—that is they came to think more correctly of God and man. The more they became at one with God, Spirit, the less they thought of the material, until, finally,

Elijah was able to see perfectly that death was not the door to immortality; that man did not have to die to inherit eternal life. It was the same truth that Jesus taught when He said:

(*John*, xvii: 3.)—"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

So it was that one day as Elijah and Elisha walked and talked upon the omnipotence and omnipresence of Spirit, that Elijah came to realize absolutely the unreality of matter;

(*II Kings*, ii: 11, 12.)—"And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof."

That is, the chariot of Spirit and the horsemen thereof. And from that day on Elisha knew no power apart from Spirit, and gave many wonderful proofs of this understanding.

Daniel

It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. (*John*, vi: 63.)



IN THE most splendid court in the world at the time of which we are writing, there were assembled on a certain day all the chief men of the empire, save one, awaiting the arrival of the king, with whom they sought an audience. That they had come on a matter of great importance there could be no doubt; and it was also plain that they had something to tell which gave them much satisfaction. For, while they awaited the arrival of the king, they spoke to each other with pleased voices, and occasionally shook each other by the hand.

The court was that of Darius, king of Persia, temporarily in Babylon, the great city which he had some time before taken from the Chaldeans. At this time the kingdom of Persia, known as the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, was the most powerful in the known world and extended over a vast territory. The greatest man in the realm, next to King Darius, was Daniel, a president and governor, also one of the Children of Israel who had been brought a captive to Babylon when Jerusalem was captured by Nebuchadnezzar.

Of all the great men who now awaited the king, Daniel was the only one absent. For this assem-

blage was the result of a great plot to overthrow Daniel, whom all the plotters hated because he was expressing truth, while they were showing forth naught but error.

Some days previous to this, these men had laid their plans to overthrow Daniel. Because there was no occasion to find fault with him or his conduct, they plotted to make his worship of God a reason for destroying him. They had gone to the king, and with flattery, had urged him to issue a decree that whosoever should ask a petition, either of God or man for the following thirty days, save of King Darius, should be cast into a den of lions.

Not suspecting the plot, Darius had issued a written decree, and this decree, because of the ancient law of the Medes and Persians, could never be changed.

(*Daniel*, vi: 10.)—"Now, when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."

Feeling sure that Daniel would do this, his enemies were on the watch, and having seen him thus in prayer, they had again assembled and were now awaiting King Darius. After a few moments the doors were flung wide open and the king, wearing his crown and clad in a long purple robe, entered preceded by the royal guard.

Immediately the vast assemblage prostrated themselves saying as with one voice: "O King live forever!"

Having seated himself upon his throne the king held out his golden sceptre, which was a sign that they might speak, and one stepping forward said:

(*Daniel*, vi: 12, 13.)—"Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said: The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day."

When King Darius heard this he realized that he had been tricked, and was sore displeased. He not only liked Daniel, but had come to know him as a valuable man, who prospered in whatever he undertook. Angrily he dismissed the assemblage, bidding them to appear again at sundown. Retiring to his private room he tried for hours to think of some way whereby he should not be obliged to obey the decree.

Like many others, King Darius did not realize that a decree—a law—based upon a lie, whether written or acted, is no law, because error cannot be legalized—that is, made lawful. Neither did he understand that all law is of God, because God is the only lawmaker, and that it is in reality, therefore, impossible to enforce any law which is not in perfect harmony with good.

It may here be said that the Medes and Persians did have a method of violating one of their own



— From the painting by Briton Riviere

DANIEL'S ANSWER TO THE KING

laws which they did not wish to enforce. This was to make another decree, which would so conflict with the first that it was impossible to enforce one without breaking the other. But Darius seemed unable to make such an one at this time, and so he struggled with himself until the sun went down.

(*Daniel*, vi: 15.)—"Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed."

Without further words Darius ordered Daniel to be brought before him. "Knowing the king's decree, O Daniel, why hast thou not obeyed?" asked Darius.

"Because, O king," replied Daniel, "the God whom I worship, commands that we pray without ceasing, and it were impossible that I should not obey His command."

Then the king gave the order, and himself led the way to the den of lions, into which Daniel was thrust, the king exclaiming as Daniel entered the den: "Thy God whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee."

(*Daniel*, vi: 17.)—"And a stone was brought and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel."

Absolutely without fear, Daniel approached the lions. Realizing perfectly the spiritual universe and that man in the image and likeness of God, Spirit, has dominion over all the beasts of the field

—which Daniel knew also as spiritual ideas—he paid but little heed to the lions. Rather, he turned his back upon the animals and his sense arose to higher and purer thoughts—thoughts of Love. This Love, reflected through Daniel, foreshadowed the time prophesied by Isaiah when he wrote:

(*Isaiah*, xi: 6.)—“The calf and the young lion and the fatling shall lie down together and a little child shall lead them.”

So filled was Daniel with these pure thoughts, so *quicken*ed by Spirit, that for the time only his spiritual selfhood appeared; and the lions, seeing nothing in Daniel upon which their carnal appetites could feed, lay down in the radiance of that Love which was reflected from the one Mind. These spiritual intuitions, pure and perfect, counteracted all sensuality and mortality, and were angels that closed the lions' mouths. And so with Daniel the night passed peacefully and happily.

But not so with King Darius, who passed the time filled with thoughts of injustice and remorse, lightened only by the little faith and hope with which Daniel's spirituality had inspired him.

(*Daniel*, vi: 19-23.)—“Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions. And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God whom thou servest continually able to deliver thee from the lions? Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live forever. My God hath sent His angel, and hath shut

the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before Him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt. Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God."

This proof of the omnipotence of God, Spirit, so impressed King Darius that he issued a decree, which made the name of the living God revered by all that great empire. And there is no doubt that many were led, by Daniel's wonderful demonstration of the power of Mind, to the worship of the EVER LIVING; therefore, as Jesus taught: (*Matthew*, v: 16.)—"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Jonah

And this commandment we have from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also. (*1 John, iv: 21.*)



NINEVEH was a great and glorious city, yet full of darkness; for the people living therein had not the light of Spirit, but rather trusted to the so-called wisdom of material men for guidance. In this way, as do all who trust to false gods and set up a lie for the truth, the people of Nineveh grew from bad to worse, until Nineveh was reckoned a very wicked city.

But Love was not willing that these people should perish because of their false beliefs. God, therefore, chose Jonah, son of Amittai—who in his generation had the clearest perception of Spirit—as His messenger to carry the healing truth unto these people, that they might be saved from the wickedness of their ways—from sins which they were committing in their ignorance of the true God.

So it was that the inspiration of Love came to Jonah and said:

(*Jonah, i: 2.*)—"Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me."

Jonah thought to disobey the voice, however, and so he rose up to flee from the presence of God. Going down to Joppa he took a ship to sail to Tarshish. Feeling that he had escaped from doing

the work which Truth had demanded of him, he went down into the hold of the ship and was soon fast asleep; for Jonah had not yet learned that God, Spirit, is everywhere and that there is no place where he could hide away from this DIVINE PRESENCE.

Now disobedience is a thought of error and must be destroyed. Because of Jonah's disobedience, when the ship was out in the middle of the sea, there arose a storm so great that the ship was likely to be wrecked. As is often the case with evildoers, Jonah seemed at first the least concerned of all on board the ship. But the sailors came and awakened him out of sleep, and when they had found that he was the cause of the storm, said unto him:

(*Jonah*, i: 11, 12.)—"What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? For the sea wrought and was tempestuous. And he said unto them, Take me up and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you; for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you."

God is not willing for one of His little ones to perish and gives them every chance to correct their ways. Because of Jonah's sacrifice, omnipotent Mind prepared a great whale to swallow him up. Then Jonah found that even in a whale's belly, where he was three days and three nights, he was not hid from the DIVINE PRESENCE. There he prayed to God to be delivered from the whale and God hearkened unto his prayer and caused the whale to vomit Jonah out on the dry land.

Now that the thought of disobedience was forgiven — destroyed — the voice of God came unto him the second time saying:

(*Jonah*, iii: 2.)—"Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee."

And Jonah arose as the Lord commanded him to do and started on a four-days' journey to Nineveh.

(*Jonah*, iii: 4-8.)—"And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown. So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water; But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God, yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands."

Because of the repentance of the people of Nineveh and their desire to learn and do good, divine Love was ready and willing to save them from the error of their way.

(*Jonah*, iii: 10.)—"And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that He had said that he would do unto them; and He did it not."

That is to say, because the people turned from evil back to good; because they returned to the way of righteousness — right thinking — the error disappeared. As good destroys only evil, and truth destroys only error, there was nothing left that omniscient Mind wished to destroy. Thus God forgave them the evil which they had committed in His sight.

But this did not please Jonah, who did not yet understand. He seemed unwilling to forgive as he had been forgiven. He had told the inhabitants of Nineveh that in forty days their great city should be destroyed, and he did not see that their changed thought — their turning from evil to good, should save them as it had saved him. Jonah's thought was so mixed with error—so adulterated with false reasoning, that he could not see that by the destruction of the evil believed in and practised by the people of Nineveh, their purification was much more effective than it would have been had their bodies been destroyed.

So Jonah was filled with thoughts of anger — of self-righteousness. When he saw that the people were saved and only the evils which they had practiced destroyed, he felt that his prophecy had been wrong, and he went out of the city and built him a booth and sat under it in the shadow, until he might see what would become of the city.

(*Jonah*, iv: 6.)—"And the Lord God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief, so Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd."

But because of the unrighteousness of Jonah's thought, a great worm smote the gourd so that the next day when the sun arose the gourd withered and died, and the sun beat upon Jonah's head "so that he fainted and wished that he might die."

Now in the midst of his great suffering it came to him how the worm that killed the gourd was just like the sin that would have destroyed Nineveh. And as he had compassion on the gourd because it could not protect itself from the worm, so he had compassion on the people of Nineveh and rejoiced that they had uncovered the worm—the error — and destroyed it before it destroyed them.

To Jonah's true self the gourd, which grew in a night and perished in a night, now stood for all that is material and temporal. Its destruction was only the destruction of a material body, such as Jonah had expected for Nineveh, while the overcoming of the sins of the people of Nineveh was a thought of purification—a spiritual breaking down of the false belief in a separation from God.

The lesson to be learned from Jonah's experience is that we should all look away from things material, and strive to know those things which are everlasting; not to judge after the sight of the eye and the hearing of the ear, but to judge righteous judgment.

Queen Esther

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee. (*Isaiah, xxvi: 3.*)



ESTHER, wife of Ahasuerus, king of Persia, sat alone in her royal apartment holding in her hand a letter which she had just finished reading. Her eyes were closed, while with uplifted countenance she silently communed with God; for Esther had been asked to do a brave and heroic deed — in which, if she failed, not only her royal position, but her life would pay the penalty.

After several minutes of this silent prayer she opened her eyes and again perused the letter: "Go thou unto the king," she read, "and make supplication for our people."

The letter was from the queen's uncle, Mordecai, a prominent Israelite, for you must know that although queen of Persia, Esther was one of the Children of Israel. Mordecai had learned that Haman, the king's prime minister, had gained permission from the king to kill all the Jews in the Persian empire and confiscate their wealth. The only way that Mordecai and the elders of Israel could plan to change the order, was for Esther to petition the king.

Previous to this she had received another and similar letter to which she had replied:

(*Esther*, iv: 11.)—"All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live; but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days."

In answer to this Mordecai had sent the following message:

(*Esther*, iv: 13-14.)—"Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. * * * Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

It was this that Queen Esther was considering. Was it possible that she had been led by God, divine Principle, to the position she now occupied for this especial purpose? It surely seemed so, for of all the maidens who had come before Ahasuerus she had pleased him more than all others and had consequently been made queen.

"Surely," she thought, "Mordecai must be right," and so she sent the following answer:

(*Esther*, iv: 16.)—"Go gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither drink nor eat for three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish."

Putting her trust in God, who is Love, she tried her utmost to know that as it was right for her to

go, there could be no evil result. She went to her private room and there, in communion with God, recalled these words from the beautiful Psalm of King David:

(*Psalm*, xci: 1, 9,10.)—"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling."

For three days did she work to realize the omnipotence of God, or good, and, at the end of that time, she put on her royal apparel and without fear stood in the inner court of the king's house.

(*Esther*, v: 2-3.)—"And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she obtained favor in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the scepter. Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom."

Now Esther did not at first tell the king her desire, because she wanted the error to be completely uncovered and completely destroyed, so she only asked that the king and Haman dine with her. The king immediately ordered Haman to prepare himself, and Esther made ready her banquet for the following day.

Now, Haman was jealous of Mordecai, not even knowing he was Esther's uncle, because Mordecai had done the king a favor in exposing a plot against

him; and Haman planned to hang Mordecai. But on the night before the banquet the king was unable to sleep and he commanded a scribe to read to him from the book of the chronicles of his realm.

(*Esther*, vi: 2, 3.)—"And it was found written, that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the door, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus. And the king said, What honor and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, There is nothing done for him."

Immediately the king sent for Haman and asked him what was the correct thing to do for some one whom he wished to honor. Haman, thinking the honor was intended for himself, replied:

(*Esther*, vi: 8, 9, 10.)—"Let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head: And let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the king delighteth to honor, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor. Then the king said to Haman, Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken."

This was a great blow to Haman's pride, but pride always goes before a fall, as was fully proven



— From the painting by Gustave Doré

ESTHER CONFOUNDING HAMAN

in this case, and whosoever attempts to use error to wickedly injure another will surely do so to his sorrow.

Now when the king and Haman had come to Esther's banquet that night, the king was so pleased with Esther that he again said:

(*Esther*, vii: 2-6.)—"What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even to the half of the kingdom. Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favor in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request. For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he that durst presume in his heart, to do so? And Esther said: The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman."

Then the king's eyes were open to the wickedness of Haman and he ordered Haman and the error he stood for destroyed, and made Mordecai a prime minister in his stead.

Thus Esther's trust in divine Love, her display of courage and steadfastness of purpose, uncovered and destroyed the error which might otherwise have overcome her and all her people.

Naaman and Elisha

For with Thee is the fountain of life; in Thy light shall we see light
(*Psalm xxxvi: 9.*)



IN THE days of King Jehoram, there dwelt in the land of Israel a very good man named Elisha. In his youth he had been a farmer. One day while plowing with twelve yoke of oxen, he had been accosted by Elijah, the prophet, and told certain truths. These truths had so impressed Elisha that he became a follower and pupil of Elijah who taught him all the truths that he had learned through his understanding of God as all good.

Being therefore, a good man and pure in heart, Elisha had been able to do many wonderful works. He had overcome error by helping to destroy the enemies of Israel. Through his knowledge of God as all power, he had healed the sick and even raised from the dead the son of a Shunammite woman.

Because of these good works, which showed that he trusted in God, his fame as a prophet spread about through all the land of Israel, even to the children, who soon came to know about his deeds and that he was a prophet of the living God.

Among the children who had heard of Elisha and had perfect faith that he was able, through his understanding of God, to heal the sick, was a little maid who lived in the most northern part of Israel. This part of the land of Israel was what is known

as the frontier—just as many years ago, when the whole western part of the United States was filled with Indians, the states nearest this wild country were called the frontier. Beyond this land, farther north, was Syria.

Now the Syrians were a warlike people and frequently bands of these Syrians would make a raid over into the land of Israel. Not only did they carry away cattle and other property, but they would often take captive some of the Israelites. One of these bands, in a raid into the land of Israel, had captured the little Jewish maid, and when they returned home, gave her as a servant to the wife of a great captain called Naaman.

In II Kings we read that this Naaman, although a mighty man of valor and a great favorite with the king, was a leper. Now a leper is a man who is afflicted with a dread disease, called leprosy, which it was once thought impossible to cure. But the little Israelitish maid, when she learned that her master was so afflicted, had no such belief. She felt sure that God would heal him, if he would only go to one who understood God. In spite of the fact that she had been made captive, she had no evil thought against Naaman, but wished to see him well. And so one day she said to her mistress:

(*II Kings*, v: 3.)—"Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy."

The words of the little maid were repeated to Naaman, and he in turn made them known to the king of Syria.

When the king heard it he was greatly pleased, and because he was very fond of Naaman, told him to go over into Israel and find the prophet. He also gave him a letter to the king of Israel, asking that monarch to help heal Naaman.

Jehoram, king of Israel at this time, was a wicked man — so wicked that Elisha had refused to have anything to do with him. As a result he did not know of all the good deeds that Elisha had done. It was then just as it is to-day, children; no matter how much good there may be all about us, it will do us no good and make no impression upon us, as long as we refuse to recognize it. But just as soon as we turn from evil to good and begin to think right, we find that good is real and lasting, while evil is only temporal.

So when Naaman came to the king of Israel bearing great gifts, Jehoram was afraid. He did not have the true understanding of God, which enabled him to heal Naaman and he did not think that there was any one in Israel who had. He, therefore, rent his clothes and called in his counselors, declaring that it was all a trick of the king of Syria to pick a quarrel with him.

“Am I a God to kill and make alive,” he asked, “that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?”

Like many others, because he could not prove the omnipotence of God, he thought there was no one who could.

Of course the coming of Naaman to the king of Israel created much interest among the Israelites

and the doings of the king became known to all in the city; among others, to Elisha

(*II Kings*, v: 8.)—"And it was so, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying: Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? Let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel."

There is no doubt that when the king heard this he was greatly pleased as well as surprised; and he sent word to Naaman to go to Elisha.

(*II Kings*, v: 9-10.)—"So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot and stood at the door of Elisha. And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying: Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean."

When Naaman received this message he was very angry. Being a man of great prominence, he thought surely Elisha would go to meet him; and besides, he thought he knew something of what Elisha ought to do to heal him. Knowing nothing of the silent prayer which brings man into harmony with God, he said to those around him:

(*II Kings*, v: 11.)—"I thought he will surely come out to meet me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper."

Being ignorant of the way in which God works, Naaman, you see, was not willing to follow in the manner of God's appointing.

As we look at Naaman's condition after all these years, and know what we do of the workings of God

through his messengers and apostles, we are surprised that Naaman should have objected to doing anything that might heal him. But, alas! there are plenty of Naamans in the world to-day—men who, like Naaman, would like to be healed of their sickness and sin, but who want the healing work done in their way instead of God's.

And so Naaman the Syrian, filled with pride and anger, turned away from the messenger of Truth and was about to return home ill, rather than obey this message.

But his servants who were more humble in their thoughts, and therefore more receptive to the message, said to him:

(*II Kings*, v: 13.)—"My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing wouldst thou not have done it? How much rather then, when he said to thee, Wash and be clean."

There must have been much of good in Naaman—as there is in all men if they will only not stifle it with pride, hatred, and envy—and so, when he had sufficiently laid aside his pride to listen to his servants and had put the anger out of his heart, and was willing to become humble and obedient, he could see plainly the wisdom of their counsel. Becoming receptive to Elisha's good thoughts—the message of God conveyed to him through the prophet—he went down and washed in Jordan, as he had been commanded, straightway receiving the blessing he had been promised, and was healed.

(*II Kings*, v: 14.)—"And his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child."

Then it was that Naaman saw and understood that he who would receive a blessing from God must be meek to the point of being obedient.

But what of the little captive maiden back in the land of Syria?

So small, seemingly, was her part in the healing of Naaman that the ancient Hebrew writers mention her no more; but every boy and girl who has done a good deed, and especially those who have — like the little Jewish maiden — returned good for evil, know the happiness she must have felt when Naaman returned home healed.

There is a lesson in this little girl's simple act for every one of us who is striving to spread the gospel of Truth and Love. It is to bear witness to its healing power wherever we are and never to allow any thought of anger or resentment to keep us from telling others where they may find the truth which shall free them from sickness and sin.

Paul

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear. (*1 John*, iv: 18.)



THE stories that we have read thus far have all been stories from the Old Testament. But now, let us look for a few minutes at the doings of one of the men told of in the New Testament — one who helped largely, by his writings and acts, to make the New Testament.

This same man, more than all the others in the Bible, has told us how to understand the words of Jesus. He has told us to be spiritually minded and not to look at things from the standpoint of matter. It was he who said to the early Christians — and his words mean just as much to us as they did to them: "Let that mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."

When first we read about this man in the Bible, he is one of Caesar's soldiers. His name was then Saul and he came from a city called Tarsus. Because of his hatred of Truth he was devoting his time to persecuting and slaying the Christians in all the cities of Judea.

(*Acts*, ix: 3-7.)—"And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said,

Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the city and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man."

From this it may be seen that the same DIVINE PRESENCE which made itself known to Noah and David and Jonah was again making itself felt; but it appeared only to one man at that time. While the others simply felt its presence, Saul alone saw the light. In spite of his seeming wickedness and error, he alone of all the company was receptive to the appearing of Truth.

(Acts, ix: 8, 9.)—"And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink."

After these three days, however, the DIVINE PRESENCE made itself known to one of the followers of Jesus, and the voice of Truth spake to him and told him to go and heal Saul of his blindness, which he did. After this Saul became one of the apostles and took the name of Paul, and in the name of Christ did many good works. He preached the gospel and through his preaching many sinners were turned from their wicked ways. Through his understanding of God as Life, Truth and Love—as taught by Christ Jesus—he healed many who were sick. He traveled through many cities telling

the people about Christ, Truth, and explaining to them many things they did not understand

Because of these things he became a great channel for good and as a result his former friends, who were still in error, sought to kill him. They had him arrested, but when they would have tried him for his life he told them he was a Roman citizen and demanded to be sent to Rome for trial. Under the Roman law his enemies were compelled to yield to his demand. He was, therefore, given in charge of a company of soldiers who took a ship and started for Rome.

(*Acts*, xxvii: 14, 20-24.)—"But not long after, there arose against the ship a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon. And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on it, all hope that it should be saved was then taken away. But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee."

After fourteen days of stormy weather it happened just as Paul had prophesied and all were saved, although the ship was wrecked upon an island.

After the company had escaped on to the land, the people on shore, although barbarians, showed them much kindness and built them fires to warm themselves.

(*Acts*, xxviii: 3-6.)—"And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, who though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live. And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm. Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god."

As we know, all of their thoughts about Paul were untrue. He was neither a murderer nor a god. He was simply one who had learned the great truth that man — made in the image and likeness of God—is spiritual and not material; that he has dominion over all creeping things. To Paul the sting of the viper was simply a form of error just as were the storm and the hatred of his enemies. Realizing the omnipotence—the all-power—of God, good, Truth, he was able to see the impotence—the no-power — of evil, error.

For many years Paul continued in captivity, but this did not prevent him from doing good. He wrote many encouraging letters to those who were struggling to understand the teachings of Jesus.

Jesus and the Children

And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. (*John, i: 14.*)



BY THE side of the great highway that follows the course of the river Jordan and leads from the land of Galilee into Judea and up to Jerusalem, a vast multitude had gathered to hear the words of a wonderful teacher — a teacher who spake as never man spake before. He had taught them many new things and had led their thoughts into ways they had never before understood. Not only had he taught them new ideas, but, in order to prove his words true, he had healed many persons of all kinds of diseases. He had made the blind to see, the deaf to hear and the lame to walk.

As he sat by the roadside teaching the people many new truths about God and man, a number of children came with their parents to hear him; and because he was good and wise, some of the parents even brought the children up to the teacher that he might lay his hands upon them and bless them.

Now there were with the teacher, who was at this time on his way to Jerusalem, twelve of his students, and when the parents brought the children around, they rebuked them and told them to take the children away and not to annoy the teacher. But he hearing what his students were saying, in turn rebuked them and said:



— From the painting by Hofmann

CHRIST BLESSING LITTLE CHILDREN

"Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God."

The teacher was Jesus of Nazareth, and of all his wise words, none has been more often repeated, because he made his meaning very plain by saying to the people: "Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter therein."

Jesus was a friend of the children. He showed it in many ways, but never so plainly as in this instance; and so the children always like to hear about his words and works. Even when he was teaching grown-ups he taught by parables—by stories which had in them a lesson that even the children can understand.

The greatest sermon ever preached was that preached by Jesus on a mountain in Galilee and which we all know as the Sermon on the Mount. It was in this sermon that Jesus gave the beautiful promises which we have named the Beatitudes and which are among the first things that are taught in Sunday-school. It was also in this sermon that Jesus spoke those wonderful words which have been called the Golden Rule. They are to be found in Matthew vii: 12, as follows:

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

It has been shortened, as different forms of language have come to be used, so that now we usually hear the rule thus: "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you."

While this rule was spoken to a great multitude of people, we could almost imagine from its sim-

plicity, that it was intended especially for the children.

And so in every lesson Jesus taught. Take the story of the Good Samaritan, which has been told in many ways. It never was told more simply than by Jesus, who, at the time he told the parable, had been teaching the value of the Golden Rule — teaching that we should love our neighbor as ourselves. A certain lawyer, who, perhaps was not so ignorant as he professed, asked. "Who is my neighbor?" Then it was that Jesus told this story:

"A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment and wounded him and departed, leaving him half dead.

"And by chance there came a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

"But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

"And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host and said unto him: "Take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest on him more, when I come again I will repay thee." "Which now, thinkest thou," asked Jesus of the lawyer, "was neighbor unto him that fell among thieves?"

Of course, the lawyer had to admit it was the good Samaritan, although in those days the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, thinking them an unrighteous people.

In like manner must we recognize our neighbors. We must judge only by the good deeds we see them do. What we may think about this or that boy or girl—until we come to know them by their daily life—has nothing to do with the real facts. But if we can see by their deeds that they are thinking kind and loving thoughts and helping us to recover from the effects of our evil thoughts and acts, which are the thieves that cause us the most trouble, we must know that they are our neighbors and think of them just as kindly as we do of ourselves.

In all the stories that Jesus told, he always made plain that it was not so much the action itself as the thought back of the act. He taught that an impure thought, even though concealed, is just as wrong as the act itself. And he likewise taught that even though the act may be simple, if it shows the right thought, it is more acceptable to God than a great deed done from a wrong or impure motive.

This was well shown in the case of a widow who came up to the treasury where all the people gathered to give to the support of good. As Jesus sat there, he noted many rich men giving large sums. But at length there came along this poor widow. She threw in two mites, a sum less than half a cent. When Jesus saw her he called his disciples to him and pointing out the woman declared:

“This poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury; for all they

did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living."

By such teaching and stories as these, and by healing the sick, Jesus set the world to thinking. Those who received his words and observed his teaching like little children, were helped to become better in every way; but those who thought they knew more than he and insisted that he should teach their way and heal the sick in their way, were not only not benefited, but came at last to a point where they hated Jesus and His work and took Him and crucified Him.

It is the same to-day. Those who accept the Christ-Truth as little children and strive to follow the example of Jesus in every way, become better and holier; while those who want to do everything their way and oppose their wisdom to God's, not only become no better, but finally reach a point where they even strive to overcome and destroy this truth.

The story of Jesus even from the time he began to teach and preach, is too long to be told here. But it is the most interesting story in the Bible and every child ought to read it in the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. There they will find that the most interesting events in his work for mankind are those which show his love for little children. It was this love that caused him, on that journey to Jerusalem, when he knew what the end would be and was preparing for the great work before him, to stop on that dusty highway, and before that great multitude to say:



— From the painting by Hofmann

JESUS AT THE HOME OF MARY AND MARTHA

“Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God.”

The Beatitudes

I

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who feel the need of right thinking; for they will strive to learn, and shall thus find the kingdom of heaven within them.

II

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are they who see in themselves a cause for mourning; for they shall turn from their evil ways and find harmony.

III

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they who, from a pure love of doing right, keep the commandments of God with never a thought that it is possible to break them; they shall inherit all that really is — all good.

IV

Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are they who seek good instead of evil, for they shall find what they seek. Those who hunger for material pleasures will never be satisfied.

V

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are those who have loving thoughts for every one, for they shall find that every one has loving thoughts for them.

VI

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are they who obey perfectly the first commandment and know no God but good. They shall realize that good is all, and seeing nothing but good is seeing God.

VII

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they who so reflect Life, Truth and Love that they bring health, harmony and heaven into the lives of the sick and sinful. Such reflection constitutes the real man, the real child of God.

VIII

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who, through right thinking and right acting, incur the hatred of evil doers. They shall find that the only real pleasure—the only real harmony — comes from within.

IX

Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Blessed it is to be persecuted for right thinking. Therefore be glad when you are thus persecuted.

Jesus and the Impotent Man



IT was a great day in Jerusalem — one of those days known as feast days, and from all over Judea the people had come to the capital city to observe it, as was their custom. There are many of these feast days in the Jewish calendar and this particular one seems to have been of great importance, because of an unusual event.

To understand this you must know that in and about Jerusalem there were a number of pools of water, which in ancient days were used as public baths. One of the best known of these, because it was close by the sheep market, in which the traders assembled and do unto this very day, was called Bethesda, and had five porches.

On this particular day all the porches were filled with a multitude of persons afflicted with various ailments — some blind, others lame, others paralyzed — because on this day, the Bible tells us, the waters were “moved,” or agitated by the divine presence of the EVER LIVING.

(*John v: 4.*) “For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water; whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatever disease he had.”

In the throng which filled the city and which was moving about from place to place, was Jesus

of Nazareth. In his walks he came to the pool of Bethesda, and stopped in pity to note how these sick people had assembled. Knowing as He did the ceaseless activity of Spirit, it is possible that Jesus came to the pool for the very purpose he afterwards accomplished. Be that as it may, it is recorded that his attention was especially attracted to a man who had been unable to move himself for thirty-eight years. Possibly his case appeared quite the most hopeless of any there, for approaching him, Jesus asked:

“Wilt thou be made whole?”

That he should have been asked such a question, must have seemed strange to the man, for instead of answering the question directly, he said:

“Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool; but while I am coming another steppeth in before me,” which would seem to indicate that the man had been there many times before.

The answer must have pleased Jesus, being, as it was, free from all criticism of those who went into the pool before him, and evidently realizing that the man was receptive to the offer made, Jesus said to him:

“Arise, take up thy bed and walk.”

(*John v: 9.*) “And immediately the man was made whole and took up his bed, and walked.”

Now it appears that the day upon which this occurred was the Sabbath, and instead of glorifying God for the good work performed in the healing, the Jews — thinking more of the letter than the spirit of the Commandment, began to find fault



— From the painting by Alexandre Bida

HEALING THE IMPOTENT MAN

with the healing because it was done on the Sabbath. They had not yet learned, as Jesus taught afterward, that it is lawful to do anything good on the Sabbath, just as it is unlawful to do evil on any day; and so they stopped the man who had been healed and said:

“It is the Sabbath day: it is not lawful to carry thy bed.”

Thinking that anyone who could heal him of an illness of nearly forty years’ standing ought to know what was right and what was wrong, the man replied:

“He that made me whole said unto me, ‘Take up thy bed and walk.’”

Then the Jews asked him who it was that healed him, but the man had not yet learned.

Some time after that, walking into the temple, Jesus met the man who had been healed. It is probable that he was very grateful, and what he may have said to Jesus, we know not; but Jesus said to him:

(*John v: 14.*) “Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.”

Words which plainly show that it is through sin, unrighteousness, wrong thinking, that disease and evil of all kind acquire power over mankind, and the way to keep ourselves free from these “worse things,” against which Jesus warned, is to keep our minds so full of the truth about God and man in his image and likeness; so full of love for God and our fellow men, that evil can find no room in which to make its abode. In this way we shall learn of that life which is God, because in this connection Jesus said:

(*John v: 24.*) "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life."

In spite of this great and good deed, when the man who had been healed told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him, they sought to slay him because he had done this thing on the Sabbath.

As we look upon their action after all these years, we wonder how they could have been so blind as not to have seen that there could have been — even from their standpoint — no better time to do a work of good, of God, than on what we call the Lord's day. If, however, we would follow Jesus' example and not fall into the error of doing evil, we should remember that all days are God's days upon which it is lawful to do only good. In this way we shall never break the Sabbath, but we shall find that by continually doing good, we are able to bring quite as much joy into the lives of those with whom we come in contact, as did Jesus into the life of the impotent man, whom he found waiting for the moving of the waters beside the pool of Bethesda two thousand years ago.

The Story of Ruth



ONE of the most interesting stories in the Bible and one that shows the double blessing that results from "Doing Something for Somebody" is that of Ruth. It is the story of people who lived during the time that Israel was ruled by the Judges,

of which it is said:

(*Judges* xxi: 25.)—"In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

Now you must know that Ruth was not a Jewish maiden, but a Moabite, who had become a member of the household of Naomi, an Israelitish woman, through her marriage with Naomi's son. The time came, however, when Naomi was left without sons, or any one to look after her. She had lived for years in the land of Moab, but when she was left thus alone, she determined to return to Israel.

Calling to her Ruth and another daughter-in-law she told them of her resolve and advised them to return to their own parents. The other daughter-in-law, whose name was Orpah, did so, but Ruth, because of her kind heart, would not leave the older woman with no one to care for her and declared her intention of returning with her to the land of Canaan.

Naomi, also unselfish in her thought, tried to change the young woman from her purpose, but

to no avail. Ruth had decided to care for Naomi and declared:

(*Ruth* i: 16.)—"Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

And now has come the time of the barley harvest, and the fields about Bethlehem of Judea are filled with harvesters. First come the reapers with their sickles and the young men who gather the sheaves, and after them the damsels, who glean the grain the harvesters let fall.

One of the largest of these fields is that owned by Boaz, a kinsman of Naomi, and one of the richest men in the tribe of Judah. As he was riding about the field and watching the harvesters he came to a part of the field where Ruth had gone that morning to try and glean a little grain for the support of herself and her mother-in-law. Noticing the stranger in the field, Boaz said to one of his overseers:

"Whose damsel is this?"

"It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab," said the overseer; "she said, I pray you let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves, so she came and hath continued from the morning until now."

(*Ruth* ii: 8.)—"Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter, Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens."

Boaz also gave her permission to drink out of the water vessels which his young men had drawn



— From the painting by Gustave Doré

RUTH AND BOAZ

for the use of the reapers and at meal time to stay by the reapers and to dip her bread into the vinegar, or native drink, that was part of the harvesters' meal.

With great thankfulness, Ruth bowed herself to the ground and said unto Boaz:

"Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?"

Like all unselfish persons it had not occurred to Ruth that she had done anything worthy of praise and she was unable to understand why she should be so favored. She was doing what she considered right, purely for the sake of doing right, and this seems to have been all the reward she expected. Boaz, however, living at a time as we have been told when every man did that which was right in his own eyes, felt that her goodness should be recognized and said to her:

(*Ruth* ii: 11, 12.)—"It hath been fully shewed me; all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law and how thou hast left thy father and mother and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust."

From his words, it is also plain that Boaz had no thought of reward other than to do a good deed, nor did he seem to understand that he was the channel through which Ruth was receiving that very blessing which he was calling down upon her.

But this is always the way with those who do right for righteousness' sake—who have no thought of self but find their greatest pleasure in doing something for somebody. Thus did Boaz not only allow Ruth to glean, but he commanded his young men that they should occasionally let fall some handfuls of grain of purpose for her. So she gleaned in the field all day and in the evening beat out what she had gathered, and the Bible tells us it was about an ephah. This she took into the city to Naomi who was greatly pleased to have such a stock of grain added to their little store.

All this time, Ruth knew not that Boaz was a kinsman of Naomi and was greatly surprised, no doubt, when Naomi told her of the relationship. Naomi told her that it was right for her to continue to glean in these fields and she did so to the end of the barley harvest and also through the wheat harvest.

In addition to the blessing which came to Ruth in her effort to help Naomi and to do something for somebody, there is also a little romance connected with the story of Ruth, for it appears that Boaz was so pleased with her kindly ways and her industry, that when the harvest days were over, in accordance with the ceremonies of the Jews, he made Ruth his wife. They had a son whose name was Obed, who was the grandfather of David, one of the most prominent characters in the Old Testament, and who did much good, not only for the Children of Israel, but, through his good thoughts and writings, for the whole of mankind.

The Story of Lot



SURROUNDED by scores of their herdsmen and shepherds, while hundreds of cattle and great flocks of sheep were scattered about them all over the plains of Canaan, stood two men. They were wealthy cattle owners who for a dozen years had together fed their flocks and cattle until now their stock was too numerous to find food and water on the same pasture. For weeks the herdsmen and shepherds of the two men had been quarreling among themselves over the pasturage until now, on this bright morning, the men had met together to talk over the situation.

They were the patriarch Abram, afterwards called Abraham, and his nephew, Lot.

Those were wild days in Palestine for both the Canaanites and Perizzites dwelt in the land and they were to the early shepherds and cattlemen much like the Indians were to the Western ranchmen of the United States fifty years ago. It was largely to protect themselves from these warlike tribes that Abram and Lot stayed together; but now that their followers were so numerous they were able to look out for themselves.

(*Genesis* xiii: 8, 9.) "And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before

thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left."

It will be already seen from this that Abram was a good man, with a kindly thought toward every one. He recognized God as the Father of all, and so it was that he did not say to Lot: "I am your uncle and being the elder you should give me first choice;" but realizing the true brotherhood of man he said: "For we be brethren,"—men who should dwell in peace and harmony.

(*Genesis* xiii: 10-13.) "And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly."

For the next ten or a dozen years Abram and Lot prospered. But because of the wickedness of those dwelling in Sodom evil days came upon them.

(*Genesis* xiv: 5, 8-12, 14-16.) "And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim. And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah,

and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the same is Zoar); and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim; With Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, and with Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar; four kings with five. And the vale of Siddim was full of slimepits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain. And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. And they took Lot, Abraham's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed. And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan. And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus. And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people."

After the evil which had fallen upon them one might think that the men of Sodom would have repented their evil ways and done better. But it was not so. They did even worse, news of which coming to Abraham he knew that greater evil would surely come upon them, and remembering Lot he communed with God and said: "Wilt Thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city, wilt Thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?"

And the voice of Truth made itself heard to Abraham and he knew that God would not destroy the righteous.

Again Abraham communed with God and besought him if there were found even forty, or thirty, or twenty, yes, or even ten righteous, that he would preserve the city of Sodom for their sake and God said:

“I will not destroy it for ten’s sake.”

But when search was made there were not even ten righteous men in Sodom, Lot alone of all the dwellers therein fearing the Lord.

Thus it was that God, divine Principle, which can not and does not change, brought about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah which stood for the very highest type of error—if we can imagine one evil being any more erroneous than another.

Every boy and girl knows that Truth destroys error—whether it be an error of mathematics or an error of thought; and when truth, which is also divine Principle, ruled in Sodom all error was destroyed.

In order, however, that Lot, the only righteous one in Sodom might be spared, the voice of Truth at last made itself heard by him, through two angels who appeared in the form of men.

(*Genesis*, xix: 15-17, 24-26.)—“And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here: lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters:



— From the painting by Gerard Hooft

LOT LEAVING SODOM

the Lord being merciful unto him; and they brought him forth, and set him without the city. And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life: look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain: escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed. Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven: And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. But Lot's wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt."

A warning which all should take. When once we have set our faces in the right direction, let nothing tempt us to look back, lest a greater evil overtake us than the one from which we fled.

How much better for Lot had he never entered Sodom: or at least how much better had he left it immediately upon finding out how evil it was and that he was not strong enough to change it!

The story of Lot teaches plainly that no one, man or woman, boy or girl, ever should associate with evil companions or go into evil places, unless for the purpose of helping some one to do, or to be better: and when this is your purpose, remember always that of yourself you can do nothing, but that "it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do."

John the Baptist



A GREAT multitude of people had assembled upon the banks of the river Jordan — where many years before the Children of Israel had crossed over from the wilderness into the land of Canaan—and were eagerly listening to the preaching of a man who was saying; “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.”

Such words as these were strange to those who had been attracted to the preacher, as the great majority of people were thinking of Heaven as a great way off: and to be told that it was “at hand,” sounded strangely in their ears. It was before the days of Jesus, who came preaching that the “Kingdom of Heaven is within you,” and it is quite probable that out of that vast throng there was none who had ever stopped to think just what was meant by “the Kingdom of Heaven” — the reign of harmony.

But the words of the preacher had about them the ring of truth, and so many were attracted to him and believed the words he spake and came to him to be baptised in the river.

Thus it was that on this particular day, many had gathered on the banks of the Jordan to hear the preaching and to be baptised.

The preacher was John the Baptist, of whom we are told in the Bible that his “raiment was of camel’s

hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins: and his meat was locusts and wild honey." As he baptised he frequently said to those gathered about him;

(*Matthew*, iii: 11.)—"I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear. He will baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."

It is probable that very few of those present knew what John meant, for while all were awaiting the coming of a Messiah, as the ancient prophets had foretold, people were just as unprepared for the coming of the Christ then as they are to receive the Christ-truth today.

Now while John was preaching and baptising, there appeared upon the banks of the river, among the throng, a young man whom many knew as Jesus, the son of Joseph the carpenter. He was then about thirty years old and had for some years been working at the carpenter's trade in and about Nazareth.

Coming down to the water's edge, he asked John to baptise him.

John must certainly been a man of great spiritual perception, for when Jesus asked to be baptised, John at first refused saying;

(*Matthew*, iii: 14.)—"I have need to be baptised of thee, and comest thou to me?" proving that John realized that he needed more of that spirituality with which Jesus was so richly endowed.

But Jesus knowing full well the custom of the times and that the rite of baptism was one to which

the people at that time gave great importance — and being about to begin His ministry, said;

(*Matthew*, iii: 15.)—"Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."

So John baptised Jesus in the sight of all the people.

(*Matthew*, iii: 16-17.)—"And Jesus, when he was baptised, went up straightway out of the water; and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And, lo, a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased."

John the Baptist was the son of the priest Zacharias and Elizabeth, and cousin of Mary, the mother of Jesus. His birth and office were foretold by the Angel Gabriel to his father while he was burning incense in the temple at Jerusalem.

John was the forerunner of the Christ, preparing the human consciousness for a greater revelation of righteousness — spiritual thinking. His was the voice of Truth crying in the wilderness of human despair and ignorance; "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

John was in truth a prophet of the Highest, and his mission was to go before and prepare the way of the Lord. Many did rejoice at his birth as foretold by Gabriel, the angel, who further said;

(*Luke*, i: 15-17.)—"For he shall be great in the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the

children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord, their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

John the Baptist caused many to turn from the evil of their ways and to seek the good. When the people asked what they should do he answered them;

(*Luke*, iii: 11.)—"He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none and he that hath meat let him do likewise." To the publican he said; "Exact no more than that which is appointed you." And to the soldiers who demanded of him what they should do he made reply:

(*Luke*, iii: 14.)—"Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages."

Though many people loved John, there were those who professed to hate him because of his teachings. They thought they were happy in their sins and did not want to forsake them. John's teachings showed them that there was no lasting pleasure in sin. This enraged them and they made every effort to defend that which they knew of a truth was not righteous, but furnished amusement for their worldly desires. Because John had re-proved Herod, the king for marrying his brother's wife, he had him bound and cast into prison and would have put him to death, but was afraid to do so because of the multitude.

When Jesus heard that John had been cast into

prison he departed into Galilee and also began to preach and to say;

(*Matthew*, iv: 17.)—"Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

When John in prison had heard of the works of Jesus he sent two of his disciples to enquire whether or not Jesus was the Messiah or if they should look for another.

(*Matthew*, xi: 4.)—"Jesus answered and said unto them, go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them."

When Herod's birthday was celebrated the daughter of Herodias danced before him which pleased him so greatly that he promised her whatsoever she should ask.

(*Matthew*, xiv: 8.)—"And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger. And the king was sorry; nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her."

Thus ended the mortal existence of John the Baptist, but the good which he did and practiced will live forever.

Something About Solomon



ON one of the loftiest peaks in the vicinity of Gibeon, in the land of Judea, a young man had just finished offering a series of sacrifices in accordance with the law of Moses. He had chosen this lofty place in which to make his offering, because at this time there was no temple in Jerusalem. The days preceding this time had been very busy ones for the young man, who had been engaged for some months in building a wall round about Jerusalem, for it must be known that the young man was King Solomon, whose father was David.

In these early days of his reign we are told that "Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David, his father; only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places."

It was because Solomon was trying to do right according to the law of Moses that he had gone to Gibeon to sacrifice, for at that time this was the great high place and Solomon, in order to show his desire to do right, had offered up a thousand burnt offerings. Having finished this work it is not to be wondered that Solomon was ready to rest and so lay him down to sleep.

At this time Solomon must have been striving hard to keep himself pure in heart, for while he slept, we are told that God appeared to him in a dream and said:

“Ask what I shall give thee.”

(1 *Kings*, iii: 6-9.)—“And Solomon said, Thou hast showed unto thy servant David, my father, great mercy, according as he walked before Thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with Thee: and Thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that Thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne as it is this day. And now, O Lord, my God, Thou hast made Thy servant king instead of David my father; and I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or to come in. And Thy servant is in the midst of Thy people which Thou hast chosen, a great people that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give, therefore, Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and bad; for who is able to judge this Thy so great a people?”

Such an answer as this, coming as the great desire of an honest heart could not fail to bring Solomon into a closer relation with God, infinite Good. And so the Bible tells us that the voice of Truth made itself heard by Solomon, and God said unto him;

(1 *Kings*, iii: 11-13.)—“Because thou hast asked this thing and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment: behold I have done according to thy words. Lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart: so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also

given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honor; so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then will I lengthen thy days."

It will be noticed that in this promise of God there is a condition; and it is a condition which every boy and girl must fulfill if they would enjoy all the good which our Heavenly Father bestows. The condition is this: "If thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments."

It is the same that Jesus spoke many years later in answering the questions of his disciples. He said it in fewer words, but it means exactly the same thing. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," said Jesus: "and all these things shall be added unto you."

All that we have to do to make this great truth practical is to understand what God meant when he said "keep my commandments," the first and greatest of which Jesus told us is "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me" — Thou shalt have no God but Spirit, which is Life, Truth, and Love — all Good.

Immediately following his dream, the truths of which took possession of his heart, Solomon began at once to seek righteousness, — that is to think good thoughts and do right, and for many years all of his acts were along the line of the greatest good.

Upon his return to Jerusalem he made a wonderful decision regarding a child whom two women claimed. Knowing, of course, that one was telling

the truth and the other a falsehood and that the one that was telling the truth would not wish to see her child hurt, Solomon ordered that the child be divided and that one-half be given to each. Of course the love of the real mother would not permit her to see her little child hurt and she quickly cried out:

(1 *Kings*, iv: 26.) — O my Lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it."

Of course Solomon knew at once from this which was the real mother and he gave her the child.

It was during the reign of Solomon that the great temple at Jerusalem was built. In those days the building of such a temple, in which God could be worshipped, was considered among the greatest of good deeds. The people had not yet learned that God was not to be worshipped in a temple made with hands, but that all who worship him must "worship Him in Spirit and in Truth."

After many years—long after Solomon had finished the temple and had done many good deeds — the Lord appeared again unto him with still another promise that if he would continue to walk uprightly and keep God's commandments, the kingdom of Israel should be established forever; but if they should turn from following God and should serve other gods and worship them the nation should be destroyed.

One would think that with all his wisdom, Solomon would have kept himself and his people in the right path. The history of the children of Israel shows, however, that he did not; and the same punishment came upon him that must come to all

who do wrong, because it is just as impossible to violate a law of God, divine Principle, and not suffer therefor, as it is to make a mistake in working an example in arithmetic and not get a wrong answer.

The story of Solomon from beginning to end shows that the promises of God are always kept. Just so long as Solomon obeyed the commandments and made God, good, first, he was powerful and rich: but as soon as he sought other Gods — material pleasures, ambition, and evil of all kinds — he lost the greatness which would otherwise have been his.

